# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 394 FL 018 472

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Livesey, Paul, Ed.; Verma, Mahenra K., Ed. |
| TITLE | York Papers in Lingustics 13. Selected Papers from the Sociolinguistics Symposium (7th, York, England, April 14-16, 1988). Special Number. |
| PUB DATE | 89 |
| NOTE | 357p.; For individual papers, see FL 018 473-497. |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC15 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Age Differences; Bilingual Education; Black Dialects; Chronological Age; *Code Switching (Language); Definitions; Dutch; Females; Foreign Countries; French; Immigrants; Language Attitudes; *Language Variation; Linguistic Theory; Phonology; Prestige; Self Disclosure (Individuals); Sexual Identity; *Sociolinguistics; Swahili; Tenses (Grammar); Uncommonly Taught Languages; Verbs |
| IDENTIFIERS | Essentialism; Glottal Stops; Great Britain; Quebec (Montreal) |

ABSTRACT

The 25 selected papers contained in this volume reflect the current diversity of interests and research methods within the field of sociolinguistics. Titles include: "What is a Language?"; "The Unreality of Quantitative Figures"; "Addressee-Oriented Features in Spoken Discourse"; "Women's Speech, Women's Strength?"; "Age Identity and Elderly Disclosure of Chronological Age"; "Pragmatic Constraints on Interrogatives in Spoken French"; "Twixt the Scylla of Total Assimilation and the Charybdis of Suicidal Purism"; "Dialect Transmission and Variation: An Acoustic Analysis of Vowels in Six Urban Detroit Families"; "Language Variation Theory in the Light of Co-Occurrence Restriction Rules"; "Realtime vs. Apparent time Change in Montreal French"; "Speech Disorder as a Sociolinguistic Problem"; "A Rebuttal of Essentialist Sociolinguistics"; "The Evaluation of Phonological vs. Phonetic Variation in Dutch Standard Pronunciation"; "Qualitative Insights into Working-Class Language Attitudes"; "Unfiltered Talk--A Challenge to Categories"; "The Concept of Prestige in Sociolinguistic Argumentation"; "Gender as a Speaker Variable: The Interesting Case of the Glottalised Stops in Tyneside"; "There's no Tense Like the Present: Verbal -s Inflection in Early Black English"; "Group Affiliation and Quantitative Sociolinguistics"; "The Role of Vernacularization in Tanzania: Swahili as a Political Tool"; "Analyzing English Lexical Elements in the Language of Dutch Immigrants in the United States"; "Linguistic Measures of Developing Social Gender Identity"; "Mediating Skills in the Development of a Multilingual Society: Perspectives for Britain"; "A Paradigm Regained: Conflict Perspective on Language Use in Bilingual Educational and Social Contexts"; and "The Effects of Styles and Speaking Rate on /l/-vocalisation." (VWL)

ED320394

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Harlow, S

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

# York
# Papers
# in
# Linguistics

## 13

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FL018472

# York Papers In Linguistics

---

# 13

SPECIAL NUMBER
EDITED BY
PAUL LIVESEY
MAHENDRA K VERMA
1989

FESTSCHRIFT R B LE PAGE

DEDICATED TO R B LE PAGE
ON HIS RETIREMENT
FROM
THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF YORK

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF YORK
HESLINGTON
YORK YO1 5DD

ISSN 0307-3238

Copyright rests with the authors

*CONTENTS*

P Livesey and M K Verma — Preface 7

R B Le Page — What is a Language? 9

List of Publications 25

*FESTSCHRIFT*

Darwish G Al-Amadidh — The Unreality of Quantitative Figures 33

Jenny Cheshire — Addressee-Oriented Features in Spoken Discourse 49

Jennifer Coates — Women's Speech, Women's Strength? 65

Nikolas Coupland and Justine Coupland — Age Identity and Elderly Disclosure of Chronological Age 77

Aidan Coveney — Pragmatic Constraints on Interrogatives in Spoken French 89

N Denison — Twixt the Scylla of Total Assimilation and the Charybdis of Suicidal Purism 101

Toni Deser — Dialect Transmission and Variation: An Acoustic Analysis of Vowels in Six Urban Detroit Families 115

Hubert Devonish — Language Variation Theory in the Light of Co-occurrence Restriction Rules 129

Malcah Yaeger-Dror — Realtime vs. Apparent Time Change in Montreal French 141

E Douglas-Cowie and R Cowie — Speech Disorder as a Sociolinguistic Problem 155

Karol Janicki — A Rebuttal of Essentialist Sociolinguistics 167

Uus Knops — The Evaluation of Phonological vs. Phonetic Variation in Dutch Standard Pronunciation 179

Caroline Macafee — Qualitative Insights into Working-Class Language Attitudes 191

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kay McCormick | Unfiltered Talk - A Challenge to Categories | 203 |
| James Milroy | The Concept of Prestige in Sociolinguistic Argumentation | 215 |
| Lesley Milroy | Gender as a Speaker Variable: The Interesting Case of the Glottalised Stops in Tyneside | 227 |
| Shana Poplack and Sali Tagliamonte | There's no Tense like the Present: Verbal -*s* Inflection in Early Black English | 237 |
| M B H Rampton | Group Affiliation and Quantitative Sociolinguistics | 279 |
| Joan Russell | The Role of Vernacularization in Tanzania: Swahili as a Political Tool | 295 |
| Henriette F Schatz | Analyzing English Lexical Elements in the Language of Dutch Immigrants in the United States | 307 |
| Marion Smith and Barbara Lloyd | Linguistic Measures of Developing Social Gender Identity | 317 |
| Jean Ure | Mediating Skills in the Development of a Multilingual Society: Perspectives for Britain | 329 |
| Eddie Williams | A Paradigm Regained: Conflict Perspective on Language Use in Bilingual Educational and Social Contexts | 343 |
| Susan Wright | The Effects of Style and Speaking Rate on /l/-vocalisation in Local Cambridge English | 355 |

R. B. Le Page.

# PREFACE

This special issue of York Papers in Linguistics contains a selection of papers from Sociolinguistics Symposium 7, held at the University of York, from 14 to 16 April 1988. Since the first Symposium, held at West Midlands College in 1976, with forty-five participants and sixteen papers presented, the Symposium has grown both in size and range of research topics covered. SS7 was attended by an international group of one hundred and twenty-three scholars, and forty-one papers were presented. Some of these scholars were unable to contribute, primarily because of the pressure of time. Even so, we had a good response. The editors of this volume were, unfortunately, forced by considerations of space to include only 25 papers. Another selection of papers from the Symposium is being published as a separate volume, YPL 14. We hope the contributors will understand.

The present issue of YPL contains, we believe, a representative sample of papers which reflects the current diversity of interests and research methods within the field of sociolinguistics. It is particularly appropriate to present this volume to Bob Le Page on his retirement from the Department of Language and Linguistic Science, University of York last year. Bob Le Page not only laid the foundation of this department, but also laid the foundation for a wide range of research in the uniquely new area of 'acts of identity'. This volume is just a small token of the good wishes and gratitude that we, as students of 'language in society', owe him. We wish him many more years of good health and active academic enterprise.

The collection of papers would not have been possible without the goodwill and cooperation of the contributors, including Joan Russell, who was also the driving force behind the successful management of SS7. We are also indebted to the departmental secretaries for their help. Our thanks also go to the students for providing help at the conference and for proof-reading of the manuscripts. Finally, we wish to express our appreciation to the series editors of YPL for giving us the opportunity to publish these papers as a special issue.

Paul Livesey

Mahendra K Verma

# WHAT IS A LANGUAGE?

R.B.Le Page
(University of York)

1. My argument will be

(i) that the concept of a closed and finite rule-system is inadequate for the description of natural languages;

(ii) that, as a consequence, the writing of variable rules to modify such rule-systems so as to accommodate the properties of natural language is inappropriate;

(iii) that the concept of such rule-systems belongs instead to a world of stereotypes about language which are usually politically or ideologically motivated, and which must constantly be re-examined. It belongs also to written language, which is an animal of a different nature in important respects from spoken language and not an alternative representation of the same animal;

(iv) that sociolinguists - and, I believe, all linguists - should while taking note of such stereotypes and the effects they have upon natural language, be concerned with the description of la langue - that is, of the systems inherent in the linguistic behaviour of networks of individuals, and with working towards models of adequate explanatory adequacy for this purpose.

2. In pursuing and illustrating the argument I am going to draw upon the reports and discussions of the 1986 York Workshop of the International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy. We were concerned at that meeting to discuss a number of case-histories of standard languages, and what relationship the stereotype of a discrete finite rule-system bore in each case to the realities of perceived linguistic behaviour. The cases we discussed in addition to Middle and Modern English were those of French, Italian, German, Greek, Chinese, Sango, Swahili, Bislama, Caribbean Creoles and Caribbean English, Nigerian English and Tok Pisin. Obviously it is not necessary to draw upon all of these, but the record of the discussions at the Workshop are full of fascinating observations and insights.

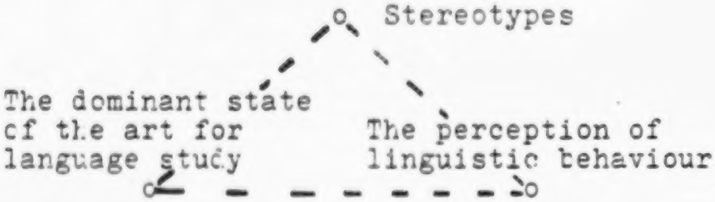
3. In our 1985 book, Acts of Identity, Andrée Tabouret-Keller and I gave on p.202 a diagram which attempts to set out a relationship between diffusion and focussing in linguistic behaviour and in theories about language.

**York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 9-24**
**© the author**

| ← diffuse | | focussed → |
|---|---|---|
| 'Instant pidgin' trading on analogy and metaphor; context-bound | Natural languages in Sense 4, including Creoles | Unchanging and eternal 'language' capable of expressing 'truth' |
| Descriptions of behaviour, highly data-oriented, context-related | More idealized and abstract descriptions, more context-free | Wholly abstract 'grammar' |

Figure 2. Focussing in linguistic behaviour related to focussing in linguistic description

I want to suggest now that we must always take account, in evaluating linguistic descriptions as to their explanatory adequacy, of factors which can be represented diagrammatically under three heads; they form vector triangles of the forces always operating upon the commentator on 'language', either linguist or layman:


Stereotypes
The dominant state of the art for language study
The perception of linguistic behaviour

I am using 'stereotypes' in the sense of those stock percepts, often rather shallowly based, which we acquire through acculturation and which, according to Adam Schaff (1984) function for humans rather as reflexes do for other organisms - that is, provide us with an automatic response to stimuli, except that they are - subconsciously - learned and not innate. By 'the dominant state of the art for language study' I am subsuming what my younger colleagues would regard as linguistic theory under a more general heading which would include, for example, philology; also, the comparative and historical linguistics of the 19th century which pursued the search for an Ursprache which had been an object of language study for many centuries previously; also, the sense in which 'learning grammar' is used among many schoolteachers as opposed to the sense in which it would be used by linguists; also, Schuchardt's ideas about language contact, language formation and language change as opposed to those of the Neo-grammarians; also, Chinese ideas about what constitutes the study of Chinese, Islamic ideas about what constitutes the study of Arabic; also, notions about the simplicity of some languages as compared with the complexity of others, and about the mother tongue - both of these being metaphors whose history Andrée Tabouret-Keller (see bibliography) has studied; also, notions about the primacy of speech, or the primacy of writing, or about the relationship of the spoken to the written language and vice-versa. These scholarly notions all clearly interact with our stereotypes.

And the perception of linguistic behaviour is obviously affected by, and in turn feeds back into, the other two corners. Most importantly, for my present argument, the perception of utterances as being either deviant or non-deviant, grammatical or ungrammatical, and so on is powerfully influenced by what has been learned under the influence of the other two corners.

4. Let me then give a few illustrations, mostly from our workshop material, under my third opening heading: that the concept of closed and finite rule-systems belongs to a world of stereotypes about language which are usually politically or ideologically motivated, and that these stereotypes must be carefully distinguished from the concept of la langue as Saussure defined it.

First let me say that members of our group have both practical and theoretical concerns - indeed the two are reciprocal. Most of us are concerned in one way or another with teacher training. By that I do not mean necessarily with the training of language teachers, but more generally with the foundations which can be laid for effective teaching across the curriculum by an understanding of how language works for the individual and for society.

We are therefore necessarily concerned with the status that concepts such as, for example, Standard English vis-a-vis dialects, or English vis-a-vis Welsh, or correct vis-a-vis incorrect English, or bilingualism, or language deficiency, have in the minds of the layman, the teacher, the politician or cultural leader, and the linguist. At a more theoretical level we are concerned with the status of the abstractions which grammars and dictionaries purport to describe. We compared case-histories to see what general processes emerged for such percepts as Language X and Language Y.

5. Let me first compare two cases, one at the highly-focussed end of our spectrum and the other very diffuse. The political ideology within the stereotype is very similar:

(i) that it is essential to impose national unity through the sole recognition of a homogeneous national language

(ii) that the precise form of that language - the rule-system, its grammar, vocabulary, and orthography - can be legislated for

(iii) that its homogeneous use can be achieved through the education system.

Such languages are written artefacts, objects of study in schools and of public examination as to their rules. As we shall see, in neither case are they the same as la langue.

6. The case of French If one sets on one side systems based on a small closed body of literature such as Ciceronian Latin or Koranic Arabic, French seems to be among the most clearly reified, totemized and institutionalized of languages. I am indebted to Andrée Tabouret-Keller, John Green, Aidan Coveney, Marie-Anne Hintze and Jean-Michel Charpentier for my information. It was Jean-Michel who said that the stereotype of a standard unifying French language performed the same function for France as the monarchy for Britain. It was decreed as the symbol of national unity in 1539, and again after the Revolution. By the end of the 17th century the written language of the intellectuals among the bourgeoisie of the Île de France, which was seen as having reached a stage of near perfection, was held up as a model for speech. It has been the model ever since.

Nobody actually speaks 'correct French'. The directives about what is to be taught in schools, and in grammars, come from unknown bureaucrats in the Ministry of Education, and when a new Minister of Education wants to make his mark he licenses some grammatical change. Anybody who writes a grammar of French, if they wish it to be adopted, must use official terminology and describe what is officially correct. Each grammarian copies his predecessors. School teachers have strict instructions about what it is they are to teach.

Aidan Coveney, who has collected material illustrating usage and attitudes in Picardy, reported how a trainee primary school teacher claimed she would correct her children's French - the example she chose was the subjunctive of an irregular verb. Coveney added: 'I strongly suspect that teachers leave uncorrected many other non-standard grammatical features which are well-established in the speech of even well-educated adults'.

There are thus at least two possible ways of interpreting the phrase 'the French language'. The first is the official way: a rule-system for a highly focussed approved written language, from which people deviate to the extent that they are not properly educated. This is superimposed upon a scene in which on formal occasions the highly-educated try to adopt this usage in their speech, particularly if they are the bourgeoisie of the 16eme arrondissement of Paris or aspire to that status, while recognizing that less well-educated or provincial people may speak a regional dialect or language. The other way of interpreting the phrase is to accept that it refers to a social stereotype which has been felt to be essential to national unity. That unity has been under threat more frequently and more recently than we in Britain remember: Napoleon might well have become an officer in the British rather than the French army when he was young, because of the Corsican separatist loyalties of his family, and Alsace has changed from being French to being German to being French to being German to being French all between 1870 and 1945. But the stereotype, and its rule-system, is a far cry from being isomorphous with la langue, the language of the French.

7. The case of Bahasa Malaysia Malaysia has many political similarities to France. There is of course possibly even more of an ethnic and religious mix, although when we think of the French we tend to forget not only Alsatians, Catalans, Basques and Bretons but Algerians, Turks, Poles, Guadeloupeans, Martiniquans, South Sea Islanders, Armenians, Italians, Corsicans and Gypsies. Malaysia has its two large ethnic minorities, Tamils and Chinese, alongside the Malays; but it has in addition the indigenous Negritos of the peninsula and the indigenous peoples of Borneo in Sabah and Sarawak - the Dayaks, Kadazan, Murut, Iban and so on. Even the Islamic Malays of West Malaysia vary a good deal culturally and linguistically from Johore in the south to Perlis which juts into Thailand in the north; and there are Babas and Sikhs and Sinhalese and Eurasians all trying not to be wholly submerged. The Malays are only just in the majority, and actually occupy a smaller landmass than the peoples of Sabah and Sarawak; they feel their hegemony permanently threatened, and had two political weapons written into the constitution at independence to underpin it: the Islamic religion and the Malay language. The language, transformed into 'Bahasa Malaysia' or 'the language of Malaysia', is supposed to unify the country through a common education system for which it is today the sole official medium of instruction. Bahasa Malaysia was to be based on the educated written Malay of Johore, and an academy, the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka or Language and Literature Agency, was set up to write the grammars and dictionaries and provide the necessary books.

Although ostensibly the objective is the unification of the state, and of a diverse population, through a common education and a common medium of education, in practice it seems to many non-Malays that the objective is to establish the native speakers of Malay in a privileged position, to redeem their economic situation and to entrench their political power. Everybody has to be taught through the medium of Bahasa Malaysia and to pass examinations in Bahasa Malaysia, and it was thought that the native speakers would thereby have an advantage previously held by the English-educated. This policy has however backfired for two reasons. The first, the important one for my argument here, is that there are no native speakers of Bahasa Malaysia, just as there are no native speakers of official French. Modern spoken educated Malay is very different from the more classical language which the Dewan Bahasa would like to build on; Bahasa Malaysia is, like French, an object of classroom study. As with French, the stereotype persists that there is one national language; and the dominant linguistic theory is that this language must be describable as a closed and finite rule-system. But the rules are still being written, and are not infrequently changed. The morphosyntax of classical Malay in particular is significantly different from that of the modern vernacular. As a result, the native speakers of the vernacular suffer more interference from that vernacular, and in general get poorer marks in their Bahasa Malaysia examinations, than non-native speakers. The second reason is that despite the efforts of the Dewan Bahasa most of the more advanced books are still in English. The pro-French movement in 16th century France was to a great extent also an anti-Latin, anti-Papal movement, but it was able to make use of an already existing body of French literature and was developing in a technologically leisurely atmosphere. The pro-Malay movement was at one time an anti-English movement and is certainly pro-Islamic, but Bahasa Malaysia has to be developed in a period when at the same time Malaysia desperately needs rapid technological advance and thus at a period when a new élite is being created of Malays who are sent to England or America or Australia for their education, both at school and university, and when the technical vocabulary has either to be created from internal resources or borrowed wholesale from English. If the terms are borrowed in their written form in an orthography which retains international technical visual recognition the problem arises how to pronounce them; if they are borrowed in their spoken form and then written according to the orthographic rules of Malay then they lose that international shape. In either case, quite acute problems arise of derivational morphology, and different people resolve these in different ways.

Now of course many of these problems have been shared by English over the centuries, and I argued at a seminar in Penang in 1983 - in a paper since published in *The South-East Asian Journal of Social Science* (1984) - that whatever degree of focussing academic written English had achieved today was the product of five or six hundred years of writing; that perhaps the Malaysians really did not need to worry if there was widespread variation in the spoken form of the national language and if that variation was reflected in writing. The reply came that the country was in too much of a hurry to take such a relaxed attitude; but the reasons for that hurry, I believe, are puristic and ideological and political rather than educational. The purists argue that the language is being bastardized; the politicians and the ideologues want one uniform Malay characteristic to be stamped upon the national culture. The concept of an invariable rule-system at the core of the educational system is certainly the dominant linguistic theory. It is a quite unnecessary influence on the political stereotypes about language but one cannot convince the ideologues of that. (The latest edict from Malaysia is that everybody must pronounce the language as it is spelt - i.e. 'geologi' must be pronounced ['ge·ɒlɒ'gi] and not like English 'geology.)

## 8. Some other cases briefly mentioned

### Italian

I have no time to deal in detail with all the other fascinating discussions at our workshop, but will mention some of them very briefly since each reflects a different position in my triangle, the stereotypes and the perception of linguistic behaviour being influenced by somewhat different dominant ideological attitudes entrenched in the study of language. Adrian Battye described Italian as a standard language in search of speakers, and Elisabetta Zuanelli told us how the political unity of Italy took hold in 1861 of Dante's earlier vision of an illustrious Italian for literature which could rival Latin. This, proclaimed as the national language in 1861, was the written language of the 2.5% of the population who made up the ruling class - these people spoke not Italian but French or Spanish or one of the urban dialects. Today a high proportion of Italians speak dialects referred to by such terms as 'Gallo-Italic', 'Veneto', 'Friulian', 'Tuscan', 'median', 'intermediate', 'southern' and 'Sardinian'. (It is worth while recalling Dante's opinion that while there were one thousand dialects in Italy the Sardinians had no language at all but just spoke very bad Latin.)

Confluent processes are taking place today - the Italianization of dialects and the dialectization of Italian. There is variation in Italy along at least four sets of parameters :

(i) functional-stylistic

(ii) diasystemic

(iii) geographical/demographic

(iv) social

Elisabetta Zuanelli concluded that the outcome of present-day sociolinguistic processes in Italy is neither foreseeable nor generalizable. One must study all the complex social processes, including teachers' attitudes towards the highly-fluctuating usage by students in their spoken and written Italian, and the strength or weakness of the focussing influence of the school system. These facts have however not prevented Andrew Radford (1978), for example, from publishing a relational grammar of Italian as if it were a unitary system, without stating anywhere in the book the source of his information - this was I believe the usage of his PhD supervisor.

Thus in Italy the status of a linguistic description of Italian in terms of a linguistic theory idealising a closed and finite rule-system, and the prescription of Italian as a homogeneous national medium of education, is at odds both with the cultural stereotypes of different cultural centres - Venice, Florence, Rome and so on - and with the perceived behaviour of the people.

## 9. Greek

The case of Greece is equally fascinating but with quite different parameters of variation; Janet Warwick and Penelope Gardner-Chloros presented us with a view of a highly-politicised battleground between the proponents of the classically-oriented stereotype of Katharevoussa and the vernacular-oriented stereotype of the demotic Greek. All Greeks are agreed that they speak Greek, and are highly-motivated to understand one another and also to claim links with their glorious literary heritage, continuity in their national language; yet in Australia Greek-speaking immigrant Serbs and Croats refuse to understand each other, and within Greece itself right-wing and left-wing cannot agree on the rules of written Greek, so that both understanding somebody else and writing a grammar are political and ideological acts. The politics of some newspapers can with some certainty be detected from the particular mix they use between Katharevoussa and Demotic. The national language is now officially Demotic; under a previous right-wing government it was Katharevoussa.

## 10. Swahili

When we discussed Swahili we found that it had many things in common with the case of Italian. Ki-Swahili was the term applied to the way the coastal peoples of East Africa who traded with the Arabs behaved linguistically in the coastal ports, which resembled in some ways the Italian city-states. It is today to be seen, by anybody standing outside my triangle and observing all the factors at work, as a conglomerate term. There is, for example, the Ki-Swahili of the Old Town, Mombasa, as described by Joan Russell (1981) focussed by the close daily interaction of a Muslim community and by the common practice of both religious and secular poetry over the centuries; there is the Ki-Swahili which was originally described by such missionaries as Bishop Steere in the 19th century from the information he gleaned from the wide variety of informants who passed through his mission in Zanzibar; the Ki-Swahili used as an administrative language by the Germans and British, and gradually standardized first under the influence of an inter-territorial East African committee and then since independence by the Institute of Swahili Research in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania having made it the national language and the medium of education. There is the Ki-Swahili which has been carried into the interior of Africa by trade and missions over an immense area as far as the Congo where it is spoken as a lingua franca, and, in some communities, for example in Zaire, as a first language. There is today, Hermas Mwansoko told us, no single model of 'correct Swahili'; but there is in Tanzania a powerful political and economic incentive to unite the country through the common use of a language sufficiently similar to all the indigenous Bantu languages to make it acceptable . Nevertheless, the tasks of the Institute in Dar es Salaam remain formidable, and many linguistic processes in the community at large continue to develop along lines with which it is very difficult for the grammarian or the lexicographer to come to terms. The dominant concept of a single invariable standard language, a rule-system which has yet to be created under the name of Ki-Swahili, is a political one.

11. I must largely leave aside the cases of German and Chinese, although I would refer to the discussion of them in our Abstracts and also, in the case of Chinese, to the introductory pages of Jerry Norman's recently published volume, Chinese (1988). Certainly, as the discussion between Paul Livesey, Luke Kang-

Kwong and our graduate students from various parts of China at the Workshop showed, a whole series of questions arise around the tension between a strong sense in China of continuity of national identity through the written language on the one hand and attempts at language reform, the use of putonghua as a universal medium of instruction and the introduction of pinyin and simplified characters on the other. I cannot resist quoting one short paragraph from Norman (p.3) on the difference between Chinese and foreign perceptions of 'Chinese' :

> The notion of a single Chinese language existing in a great number of forms, both written and spoken, has important implications for Chinese linguistics. For one thing, it is difficult to draw sharp boundaries between the different varieties of the language: the colloquial is permeated with elements taken from the literary language, and many texts written in the literary language betray the influence of the contemporary vernaculars. The current standard language is an amalgam of the popular Peking dialect, loans from the literary language, and even features of other present-day dialects. The Chinese are of course aware of the differences between the modern vernacular-based standard and the older literary language; but they probably do not think of them as two utterly different languages, as the typical foreign observer is prone to do.

12. I must finish these examples from different positions within my triangle with a situation which at first sight is at the other extreme from Chinese but on closer inspection proves to have a great deal in common with it: I refer to the post-independence attitudes towards language in various Pidgin and Creole-speaking communities.

## 13. Tok Pisin

We heard a good deal about Tok Pisin, in respect of which Peter Mühlhäusler made the comment that 'the very label "language" is a misleading thing. We are led astray by operating in terms of culture-specific metaphors'. Emanuel Odumuh followed up this comment by saying that he had for years been trying in Nigeria to draw boundaries around 'broken English' as opposed to 'Pidgin' and 'non-standard' and 'Standard Nigerian English', and that from a theoretical point of view and for simplification to look at it in terms of what Lawrence Carrington had suggested as 'a multidimensional pyramidal structure' was helpful in some ways but for him as a teacher raised more problems than it solved. Mühlhäusler's conclusion on Papua-New Guinea was one of the most pointed for my purposes now:

> (p.106) Planning has been dominated by Western ideas of efficiency. At its centre stands the perceived need for an invariable linguistic code. Such planning

> is not based on observations of how New Guineans have managed to communicate successfully in linguistically very heterogeneous contexts. A principal conclusion of my paper is that a systematic study of indigenous metalinguistic systems together with observations of the factors that determine successful communication in societies such as those of Melanesia is an essential pre-condition for overcoming Western prejudices about the nature of language and language planning.

## 14. The Caribbean

A very similar point has been made recently by Hubert Devonish in relation to the indigenization of language studies and Creole as the medium of education in the Caribbean - what are the grammatical categories which make sense at a subconscious as well as at a conscious level to people who speak a creole vernacular? At present all study of language is in terms of Indo-European categories and concepts; and yet, for example, in Creoles all words are - as they are in Chinese - multi-functional, and topic - comment structures are frequently more salient than subject-predicate structures. What is absolutely certain is that a closed and finite rule-system representing a standard language which then has to be modified with further rules to take account of deviance is wholly inappropriate to the definition and description of Creole vernacular usage and to the production of materials, grammars and dictionaries for language study.

In one of the first papers I published on my proposed Linguistic Survey of the British Caribbean in 1951 I wrote that there appeared to be a whole spectrum of use ranging from Standard British English at one end to the broad rural vernaculars at the other; that the Standard end had already been fairly thoroughly described, and that the best I could do was to try to describe the broad vernacular end of the spectrum and give some indication of how people's usage fluctuated between these two ends. This view fitted in with the stereotypes of most educated people, including teachers and educationists, in Jamaica itself - there was correct English and there was bad or broken talk or patwa. But by the time I had been closely involved with the community in a variety of ways for a few years I realised this was a false model. There was more than one broad vernacular; what was going on in most school classrooms was certainly not going on in Standard British English except within the covers of books, most of which came from England; there were many people who claimed a command of each end of the spectrum who in fact commanded neither; Standard British English vs. Patwa was a highly politicised debate in which the teachers had a vested interest but little linguistic understanding. But by the time I realised this and understood what I must try to put in place of this model it was too late. William Stewart in about 1964 invented the terms basilect and acrolect to describe the two ends of my spectrum, and

David DeCamp, who had come to work with me in Jamaica, had seized upon the idea of a polylectal continuum. Derek Bickerton then elaborated this into something rather like an escalator to preserve the concept of Chomskyan rule-systems while arranging a series of them, each distinguished from the next by a single rule-change, to carry the homogeneous broad vernacular speakers inexorably towards the homogeneous standard. The American bandwagon rolled along these lines; 'the post-creole continuum' had become a stereotype among creolists.

## 15. Conclusion

Today Caribbean teachers and examiners are faced with a very difficult problem in establishing guidelines for the Caribbean Examinations Council as to what is acceptable educated usage; the universities and the teacher training colleges are struggling with the problem of what guidance to give to teachers and lecturers and students. Teachers in Vanuatu and in the Central African Republic and in Nigeria and in India face very similar problems - indeed, we find they are universal.

Nothing I have written here is new. (See, for example, Robert A.Hall Jr. on the centrality of the idiolect.) I have been re-stating and exemplifying facts which were well established long before 1965 when many were hypnotised into thinking of the idealized speaker-listener in a homogeneous community as the object of our study and the closed and finite rule-system generating an infinite set of sentences as the proper outcome.

It is not in the nature of human language for such objects to exist. The motivation which gives rise to such concepts as discrete, closed, finite rule-systems is to be distinguished from that which drives the need for self-expression and identification and communication, although there is clearly cross-over influence between the two. Natural language is inherently and necessarily a polysystemic and potentially infinite network of relationships with an unlimited capacity for analogical development and evolutionary changes, of which the development of writing is one. There are many examples of linguistic systems which have only become discrete when different orthographies were devised for them: Hindi and Urdu are the best-known examples, but at our Workshop we discussed many more from Alcuin's orthography for Latin down to the attempts to write Louisiana French, to standardize the writing of Bislama, or to find a common orthography for Caribbean Creoles. To return momentarily to my first diagram, it seems to me that literacy represents a definite step, a section across these interacting processes after which focussing both of linguistic behaviour and of linguistic theory is likely to be greatly accelerated, initially for an élite and subsequently, in some societies, for the mass of the people. Written languages are, as I have said, animals with different properties from spoken languages. Elite written languages are different from mass written languages.

It is our urgent task as linguists to find ways of describing for teachers the properties of the triangle I have been depicting, and the ways in which the three corners interact with each other. We must find ways of talking about clusters of concomitant circumstances, linguistic and social, within which probability statements replace rules or laws of cause and effect. Such a revolution has already overtaken physics (see, most recently, Stephen Hawking's Brief History of Time); it is high time it overtook linguistics also. I first asked for 'quantum linguistics' in my foreword to Beryl Loftman Bailey's Jamaican Creole Syntax (1966), but so far only a few, creolists, seem to have recognized the need.

(An earlier version of this paper was given at the First Hong Kong Conference on Sociolinguistics in 1988.)

# REFERENCES

Abdulaziz, M.H. 1971 'Tanzania's national language policy and the rise of Swahili political culture' in Whiteley ed.1971, 160 - 178

Abdulaziz, M.H. 1980 'The Ecology of Tanzanian National Language Policy' in Polomé, E.C. and Hill, C.P. (eds.) *Language in Tanzania* Oxford, O.U.P.

*Abstracts*: See Le Page, R.B. ed.1986 *International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy*

Bailey, Beryl L. 1966 *Jamaican Creole Syntax* Cambridge University Press

Baker, Philip 1986 'Mauritian Creole' *Abstracts* 86 - 8

Battye, A.C. 1986 'The Standardization of Italian' *Abstracts* 32 - 34

Carrington, Lawrence 1986 'Uncertain language attitudes in Trinidad and Tobago and St.Lucia' *Abstracts* 89 - 91

Charpentier, Jean-Michel 1986 'Standardization of Bislama (Bichelamar)' *Abstracts* 108 - 113

Christie,Pauline 1986 'Standardization in the Anglophone Caribbean' *Abstracts* 116 - 118

Coveney, Aidan 1986 'Standardization of Modern French' *Abstracts* 19 - 21

Dante Alighieri (c.1300) *De vulgari eloquentia* trans. A.G.Ferrers Howell 1904, in *Latin Works*, trans. and ed. by various hands. London : Dent

DeCamp, David 1971 'Toward a generative analysis of a post-creole continuum' in Dell Hymes ed. *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages* C.U.P.

Devonish, Hubert - outline of future research programme (p.c.)

Ferguson, Charles 1959 'Diglossia' *Word* 15, 325 - 40

Fodor, Istvan & Hagège,Claude eds. 1983-4 *Language reform: history and future* 3 vols. Hamburg: Buske Verlag

Gardner-Chloros Penelope 1986 'Standardization of modern Greek' *Abstracts* 43 - 6

Green, John. 1986 'Standardization: perceptions and prejudices in Early Romance' Abstracts 14 - 16

Haas, W. ed. 1982 *Standard Languages, spoken and written* Manchester University Press

Hall, Robert A. Jr. 1968 *An essay on language* Philadelphia : Chilton Books

Hawking, Stephen W. 1988 *A brief history of Time* London : Bantam

King, Ruth 1986 'French in a minority context' *Abstracts* 8 - 10

Le Page, R.B. 1964 'Multilingualism in Malaya' CCTA/CSA *Proceedings of the 1962 Brazzaville Symposium on Multilingualism* ed. W.H.Whiteley, London

Le Page, R.B. 1984 'Retrospect and prognosis in Malaysia and Singapore' IJSL 45, 113 - 126

Le Page, R.B. 1985 'The language standardization problems of Malaysia set in context' *The South-east Asian Journal of Social Science* 13,1,29-39

Le Page, R.B. 1988 'Some premises concerning the standardization of languages, with special reference to Caribbean Creole English' IJSL 71,25-36

Le Page, R.B. ed. 1986 *International Group for the study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy : Abstract of the Proceedings of the 1986 Workshop*. University of York, Department of Language and Linguistic Science, mimeo.

Le Page, R.B.and Tabouret-Keller, Andrée. 1985 *Acts of Identity* Cambridge University Press

Livesey, Paul 1986 'Language reform in China' *Abstracts* 59 - 61

Luke, Kang-Kwong 1986 'Attitudes towards the standardization of Chinese in Hong Kong' *Abstracts* 62 - 5

Marrelli, Jocelyne Vincent 1986 'Variation in Neapolitan BLUES' *Abstracts* 35 - 38

Milroy, James and Lesley 'Language standardization: Modern English' *Abstracts* 126 - 8

Mühlhäusler, P. 'Standardization of Tok Pisin' *Abstracts* 105-7

Norman, Jerry 1988 *Chinese* Cambridge University Press

Odumuh, E. 1986 'Standardization of Nigerian English' *Abstracts* 79 - 82

Radford, Andrew 1978 *Italian Syntax : transformational and relational grammar* Cambridge University Press

Russ C.V.J. 1986 'Standardization in German : an historical perspective' *Abstracts* 49 - 52

Russell, Joan C. 1981 *Communicative competence in a minority Group* Leiden : E.J.Brill

Russell, Joan C. 1986(a) 'From lingua franca to National Language : a re-examination of the origins of Standard Swahili' in J.A.Fishman et al eds. *The Fergusonian Impact* Vol 2. 337 - 50. Berlin : Mouton de Gruyter

Russell, Joan C. 1986(b) 'Standardization of Swahili' in *Abstracts* 74 - 6

Samarin, William J. 1986 'Sango of the Centralafrican Republic' *Abstracts* 67 - 70

Saussure, F. de 1916 *Cours de Linguistique Generale*, publié par Charles Bally et al,Paris. Translated as *Course in General Linguistics* by Wade Baskin, London 1960

Scaglione, Aldo ed. 1984 *The emergence of national languages* Ravenna: Longo Editore

Schaff, Adam 1984 'The pragmatic function of stereotypes' IJSL 45 89 - 100

Schuchardt, Hugo *Kreolische Studien* Vienna 1882 - 1891 translated in part by T.L.Markey, *The Ethnography of Variation* Ann Arbor: Karoma 1979 and by Glenn G.Gilbert, *Pidgin and Creole Languages* C.U.P. 1980

Smith, Ian 1986 'The failure of literacy in 19th century Sri Lanka Portuguese' *Abstracts* 101 - 4

Steere, E. 1870 *A handbook of the Swahili language, as spoken in Zanzibar* London

Stewart, W.A. 1964 'Urban Negro speech : sociolinguistic factors affecting English teaching' in R.Shuy ed. *Social dialects and language learning* Washington D.C.

Tabouret-Keller, Andrée 1979 'Origine et simplicité: des langues créoles au langage des enfants' Enfance Paris 3 - 4 269 - 292

Tabouret-Keller, Andrée 1980 'Psychological terms in Creole studies: some difficulties' A.Valdman and A.Highfield eds. Theoretical orientations in Creole Studies 313-330 N.Y. : Academic Press

Tabouret-Keller, Andrée 1986 'The case of French' Abstracts 4 - 7

Tabouret-Keller, Andrée and Le Page, R.B. 1986 'The mother-tongue metaphor' Grazer Linguistische Studien 27 249 - 259

Valdman, Albert 1986 'The standardization of Haitian Creole' Abstracts 92 - 96

Warner, Anthony 1986 'Standardization and the vernacularization of literacy in Middle English' Abstracts 123 - 125

Warwick, Janet 1986 'The demise of Greek diglossia' Abstracts 41 - 42

Whiteley, W.H. 1969 Swahili London : Methuen

Whiteley, W.H. 1971 Language Use and Social Change London : O.U.P.

Whiteley, W.H. 1974 Language in Kenya Nairobi : C.U.P.

Zuanelli Sonino, Elisabetta 1986 'Standardization and vernacularization of Italian' Abstracts 29 - 31

# LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Le Page, R.B. 1951. 'The dramatic delivery of Shakespeare's verse'. *English Studies* XXXII, 2, April 1951. 63-68.

-------------. 1952a. *The structure of alliterative verse*. Jamaica: University of the West Indies. Mimeo. 87pp.

-------------. 1952b. 'The English language'. *Caribbean Quarterly* 2, 2. Jamaica: UCWI, Extra-mural Dept. 4-11.

-------------. 1952c. 'A survey of dialects in the British Caribbean'. *Caribbean Quarterly* 2, 3. Jamaica: UCWI, Extra-mural Dept. 49-51.

-------------. 1954. 'Languages of the Caribbean - Arguments for a survey'. *Times Educational Supplement*, 19 March.

-------------. 1955a. 'The language problem in the British Caribbean'. *Caribbean Quarterly* 4, 1. Jamaica: UCWI, Extramural Dept. 40-49.

-------------. 1955b. 'Creole Language Studies and Creole Culture'. *Social and Economic Studies*, Jamaica, 4, 3, 1955.

-------------. 1957a. 'A rhythmical framework for the five types'. *English and Germanic Studies*, 6, ed. by A.S.C. Ross. Birmingham University. 92-103.

-------------. 1957b, 1958a. 'General outlines of Creole English dialects in the British Caribbean'. *Orbis* Louvain (Leuven) Belgium. 6, 1957: 373-391, and 7, 1958: 54-64.

-------------. 1958b. 'The arts as a field of experience'. *The idea of a university*. Jamaica: UCWI. 73-91.

-------------. 1959a. 'Alliterative patterns as a test of style in Old English poetry'. *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 58, 3. 434-441.

-------------. 1959b. Report on the (First International) Conference of Creole Language Studies, March 28 - April 4 1959, at the University College of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. *Social and Economic Studies*, vol 8, no 2 June 1959. Jamaica: UCWI, Institute of Social and Economic Research. 223-226.

-------------. 1960. 'Jamaican Creole: an historical introduction'. *Creole Language Studies* I, 1960. 3-124. London: Macmillan.

-------------. 1961. 'General linguistics and English language studies'. *Universities Quarterly*. 82-6.

-------------. 1962. *The Language Barrier*. Inaugural Lecture, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. 25pp.

-------------. 1963. Review of Frederic G. Cassidy, *Jamaica Talk*, London 1961. *American Speech*, May 1963. 135-137.

-------------. 1964a. *The National Language Question*. Oxford: Oxford University Press for Institute of Race Relations. Reprinted with minor corrections 1966, 1971.

-------------. 1964b. 'Multilingualism in Malaya'. *Proceedings of the 1962 Brazzaville Symposium on Multilingualism*, ed. by W.H. Whiteley. London: CCTA/CSA.

-------------. 1966. Foreword to Beryl Loftman Bailey, *Jamaican Creole Syntax, a transformational approach*, v-viii. Cambridge University Press.

-------------. 1967a. Review of Anton Donicie C.ss.R. en Jan Voorhoeve, *De Saramakaanse Woordenschat*. Bureau voor Taalonderzoek in Suriname van de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Mimeo n.d. [1963] *Lingua* 17, 4, 1967. 441-445.

-------------. 1967b. Review of Robert A. Hall Jr., *Pidgin and Creole Languages*. *Journal of African Languages* 6. 83-6.

-------------. 1967c. 'Intercomprehensibility between West Indian and other forms of English'. *Remedial Education*. 129-135. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

-------------. 1968a. 'Problems to be faced in the use of English as the

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 25-38

medium of instruction in four West Indian territories'. J. Fishman et al., eds., *Language problems of developing nations*. New York: John Wiley. 431-441.

-------------. 1968b. 'Problems of description in multilingual communities'. *Transactions of the Philological Society*. 189-212. Oxford: Blackwell, for Philological Society.

-------------. 1968c. 'Language and nationalism'. *Insight* (Sussex University), 3, 1968, pp 12-14.

-------------. 1968d. Review of Francis P. Dinneen, *An introduction to general linguistics*, New York, 1967. *Philosophical Quarterly*, 18, 73, October 1968, 373-4.

-------------. 1969a. 'Dialect in West Indian literature'. *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 7. 1-7. University of Leeds and Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

-------------. 1969b. Commentary on the theme, 'How can we measure the effects which one language may have on the other in the speech of bilinguals?'. *The Description and Measurement of Bilingualism*, ed. by L.G. Kelly. 142-147. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

-------------. 1969c. Review of J.J. Thomas, *Theory and practice of creole grammar*. Port of Spain 1869, reprinted by New Beacon Books, London, 1969. *Journal of African Languages* 8, 1, 1969. 67-69.

-------------. 1969d. Linguistics and modern language teaching. *Journal of the National Association of Language Advisers*, 1969. 27-29.

-------------. 1969e. Review of Joshua A. Fishman et al., *Language problems of developing nations*. New York, 1968. *Man*, 1969.

-------------. 1971a. Review of W.H. Whiteley, *Language Use and Social Change*, Oxford University Press 1971. *Times Literary Supplement*, June 4 1971.

-------------. 1971b. 'The study of the English language'. *English: an outline for the intending student*, ed. by Angus Ross. 75-102. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

-------------. 1971c. Review of L.G. Kelly (ed.), *The description and measurement of bilingualism*. University of Toronto Press and Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 1969. *Lingua* 16. 427-33.

-------------. 1971d. Reviews of Edwin Ardener (ed.), *Social anthropology and language*, Tavistock Press, 1971, and of Dell Hymes, *Pidginization and creolization of languages*. Cambridge University Press, 1971. *Times Literary Supplement*.

-------------. 1971e. Review of Arne Zettersten, *The English of Tristan da Cunha*, Lund: Gleerup 1969. *Lingua* 26, 3. 328-332.

-------------. 1972a. 'Preliminary report on the sociolinguistic survey of Cayo District, British Honduras'. *Language in Society*, 1. 1. 155-172. London: Cambridge University Press.

-------------. 1972b. Review of Dell Hymes, *Pidginization and creolization of languages*, 1971. *Man*.

-------------. 1972c. Review of Morris Halle and Samuel Jay Keyser, *English stress: its form, its growth, and its role in verse*. New York: Harper and Row. 1971. *York Papers in Linguistics* 2. 175-181.

-------------. 1973a. Review of W.A. Wolfram and Roger Shuy, *A sociolinguistic description of Detroit Negro speech*, 1969, and R.W. Fasold and Roger Shuy, *Teaching Standard English in the inner city*, 1970. *Linguistics* 118, Dec 15, 1973. 119-125.

-------------. 1973b. 'The concept of competence in a creole/contact situation'. *York Papers in Linguistics* 3. 31-50. Reprinted in D. Feldman (ed.) 1977 *Studia gratularia in honour of Robert A. Hall Jr.*, Madrid 173-189. (See Le Page 1977c.)

-------------. 1973c. Review of John Spencer (ed.), *The English Language in West Africa*, London: Longman 1971. *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 8,

1. 122-124.

-------------. 1973d. Reviews of Edwin Ardener (ed.), *Social anthropology and language*, London: Tavistock 1971, and of W.H. Whiteley (ed.), *Language use and social change*, London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1971. *Journal of Linguistics* 9, 1973. 140-147.

-------------. 1974. Review of Joshua A. Fishman, Robert L. Cooper and Roxana Ma, *Bilingualism in the Barrio*, Indiana University Science Monographs 7. The Hague: Mouton. *Lingua* 34, 1974. 89-93.

-------------. 1975a. 'Polarizing factors: political, social, economic, operating on the individual's choice of identity through language use in British Honduras'. J.G. Savard et R. Vigneault, *Les Etats Multilingues/ Multilingual Political Systems*. Laval University Press, 1975. 537-551.

-------------. 1975b. Review of R. Bauman and J. Sherzer (eds.), *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking*, Cambridge University Press, 1974. *Times Literary Supplement*, 23.5.75.

-------------. 1975c. Review of W.H. Whiteley (ed.), *Language in Kenya*, Oxford University Press, 1974. *Linguistics* 12.2.

-------------. 1975d. 'Sociolinguistics and the problem of "competence"'. *Language teaching and linguistics abstracts*, 8. 137-156. Revised version, see Le Page 1978b.

-------------. 1975e. Review of Derek Bickerton, *Dynamics of a Creole system*. Cambridge University Press 1975. *Times Literary Supplement*, Sept. 19, 1975.

-------------. 1976. Review of W.H. Whiteley (ed.), *Language in Kenya*, Oxford University Press, 1974. *Journal of Linguistics* 12, 1. 188-192.

-------------. 1977a. 'Processes of pidginization and creolization'. *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, ed. by A. Valdman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 222-255.

-------------. 1977b. 'De-creolization and re-creolization: a preliminary report on the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities, stage II: St. Lucia'. *York Papers in Linguistics* 7. 107-128.

-------------. 1977c. 'The concept of competence in a Creole/contact situation'. *Studia gratularia in honor of Robert A. Hall Jr.*, ed. by David Feldman. Madrid: Playor. 173-189. Reprinted from York Papers in Linguistics 3, 1973.

-------------. 1977d. Review of W. Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, Blackwell 1977. *New Society*, 31.3.77. 666-7.

-------------. 1978a. *"Projection, focussing, diffusion", or, steps towards a sociolinguistic theory of language, illustrated from the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities, stages I: Cayo District, Belize (formerly British Honduras) and II: St. Lucia*. School of Education, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad: *Occasional Paper No. 9 of the Society for Caribbean Linguistics*.

-------------. 1978b. 'Sociolinguistics and the problem of "competence"'. *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Surveys*. London: Cambridge University Press. 39-59. (Revised and extended version of 1975d.)

-------------. 1978c. 'Some preliminary comments on comparative lexicography in the Caribbean'. Paper 12 in *Collected Preprints, Conference of the Society for Caribbean Linguistics 1978*. Cave Hill, Barbados: University of the West Indies, Department of English and Linguistics.

-------------. 1979a. Review of Dell Hymes, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. London: Tavistock Publications 1977; and Norbert Dittmar, *A critical survey of sociolinguistics: theory and application* (trans. P.A.M. Seuren and Kevin Whiteley) New York: St Martin's Press 1976. *Journal of Linguistics* 15, 1, March 1979. 168-179.

-------------. 1979b. Review of Max K. Adler, *Pidgins, creoles and lingua francas*, Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag 1977. *Language in Society* 1979.

129-130.

-------------. 1980a. 'The concept of "a language"'. *Festgabe für Norman Denison*, ed. by K. Sornig. Grazer Linguistische Studien 11/12 Fruhjahr 1980. Universität Graz: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft. 174-192.

-------------. 1980b. 'Hugo Schuchardt's Creole studies and the problem of linguistic continua'. Klaus Lichem und Hans Joachim Simon, eds. *Hugo Schuchardt: Schuchardt-Symposium 1977 in Graz, Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften

-------------. 1980c. 'Theoretical aspects of sociolinguistic studies in pidgin and creole'. *Theoretical orientations in Creole studies*, ed. by Albert Valdman and Arnold Highfield. New York: Academic Press. 331-68.

------------. 1980d. '"Projection, focussing, diffusion"' *York Papers in Linguistics* 9, ed. by M.W.S. De Silva, *Feschrift for R.B. Le Page*. 9-31. Reprint of 1978a above.

------------. 1980e. Review of Jurgen M. Meisel, ed., *Langues en contact - Pidgins - Creoles - Languages in contact*, Tübingen 1977. *York Papers in Linguistics* 8. 225-6.

------------. 1981. *Caribbean Connections in the Classroom*. A pamphlet of guidance for teachers concerned with the language problems of children of Afro-Caribbean descent, iv, 32pp. University of York for Mary Glasgow Language Trust Limited.

-----------. 1982. Preface to Philip Baker and Chris Corne, *Isle de France Creole: Affinities and origins* vii-viii. Ann Arbor: Karoma Publishers Inc.

-----------. 1983a. Review of D. Bickerton, *Roots of Language*, Ann Arbor: Karoma Press 1981. *Journal of Linguistics* 19, 1, March 1983. 258-265.

-----------. 1983b. Review of P. Trudgill, *On dialect*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1983. *Times Literary Supplement*, May 20 1983. 524.

-----------. 1983c. Foreword to John Holm ed. *Central American English*. Heidelberg: Julius Groos Verlag.

-----------. 1983d. Review of Philippe Van Parijs, *Evolutionary explanation in the social sciences*, London, Tavistock Publications 1981. *Journal of Literary Semantics* XII/2, October 1983. 87-89.

-----------. 1983e. Caribbean Connections in the Classroom (Sections 1-4, 8, Epilogue) reprinted in Michael Stubbs and Hilary Hillier eds. *Readings on language, schools and classrooms*. London: Methuen. 93-112.

-----------. 1984a. 'Retrospect and prognosis in Malaysia and Singapore'. Joshua A. Fishman ed. Tenth Anniversary volume of *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 45, 113-126.

-----------. 1984b. Introduction to *Papers from the York Creole Conference 1983*, ed. by M. Sebba and L. Todd. University of York, Department of Language: *York Papers in Linguistics* 11, 5-7.

-----------. 1984c. Review of Ellen Woolford and William Washabaugh, *The social context of creolization*, Ann Arbor: Karoma Publishers 1983. *Australian Journal of Linguistics*, June 1984, 109-115.

-----------. 1984d. Review of István Fodor and Claude Hagège eds., *Language reform: history and future*, 3 vols 1983-4, Hamburg, Buske Verlag. *Linguistics* 22. 919-923.

-----------. 1984e. 'Focus on Creolists 8: Frederic Gomes Cassidy'. *Carrier Pidgin*. 12, 1, March 1984, pp 1-3.

-----------. 1985a. Review of K.C. Phillipps, *Language and class in Victorian England*, Blackwell/Deutsch 1984. *Linguistics* 23. 167-8.

-----------. 1985b. Review of Chris Kennedy ed., *Language planning and language education*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1984. *Linguistics* 23. 168-9.

-----------. 1985c. Review of Loreto Todd, *Modern Englishes: Pidgins and Creoles*, Blackwell/André Deutsch, and of John Platt, Heidi Weber and Ho Mian Lian, *The New Englishes*, Routledge and Kegan Paul. *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 February 1985. 155.

-----------. 1985d. 'The standardization of languages and the vernacularization of literacy'. Peter S. Green ed., *York Papers in Language Teaching: Festschrift for Eric Hawkins on his 70th birthday*. University of York, Language Teaching Centre. 129-137.

-----------. 1985e. 'An outsider's view of research needs in second language learning'. *Second Language Learning: research problems and perspectives*. Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, London. 20-28.

-----------. 1985f. 'The language standardization problems of Malaysia set in context'. *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 13, 1, Spring 1985: Special issue on sociolinguistics in Southeast Asia, ed. by Eddie C.Y. Kuo. 29-39.

-----------. 1985g. Review of Richard B. Noss ed., *An overview of language issues in South-East Asia 1950-1980*, Singapore: Oxford University Press. *Asian Affairs* 16, 3, October 1985, London: Royal Society for Asian Affairs. 331-2.

-----------. 1985h. Review of James E. Alatis and John C. Staczek eds. *Perspectives on bilingualism*. Georgetown University Press 1985. *Linguistics* 23, 1985. 638-9.

-----------. 1986a. Review of S.A. Wurm ed., *Papers in pidgin and creole linguistics no.3*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics Series A65. *York Papers in Linguistics* 12, 181-187.

-----------. 1986b. Review of Roger Hewitt, *White talk black talk*. Cambridge University Press 1986. *York Papers in Linguistics* 12, 177-179.

-----------. 1986c. 'Acts of Identity' in *English Today* 8, 1986, pp 21-24.

-----------. 1987a. 'The need for a multidimensional model'. Glenn G. Gilbert ed., *Pidgin and Creole languages: Essays in memory of John E. Reinecke*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987. pp 113-129.

-----------. 1987b. Review of John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes eds., *Directions in sociolinguistics: the ethnography of communication*, 1986, in *Journal of Literary Semantics*. XVI/3, 1987, pp 238-242.

-----------. 1988a. Reviews of John R. Rickford, *Dimensions of a Creole Continuum*; Suzanne Romaine, *Pidgin and Creole Languages*; Sarah Grey Thomason and Terrence Kaufman, *Language contact, creolization and genetic linguistics*. *Times Literary Supplement*, September 1988, p.972.

-----------. 1988b. 'Some premises concerning the standardization of languages, with special reference to Caribbean Creole English'. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 71, 1988, 25-36.

-----------. 1988c. 'Probleme der Beschreitung in multilingualen Gemeinschaften' in J. Raith et al. eds., *Grundlagen der Mehrsprachigkeits forschung*, Stuttgart, 1986.

-----------. 1989a. 'Writing systems and the vernacularization of literacy'. Position paper for 1988 International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy Workshop, see *Abstracts* 1988, pp 7-13.

Le Page, R.B. (ed.) 1960, 1961. *Creole Language Studies* vols I (1960) and II (1961). Vol.I *Jamaican Creole*, R.B. Le Page 'Historical background to Jamaican Creole', David DeCamp 'Four Jamaican Creole Texts'. Vol.II *Proceedings of the Conference on Creole Language Studies, Mona 1959*. London: Macmillan.

-------------. (ed.) 1986. *Abstracts of the proceedings of the Workshop of the International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy, York 1986*. University of York, Department of Language and Linguistic Science.

-------------. (ed.) 1989. *Abstracts of the proceedings of the Workshop of the International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy, York 1988*. University of York, Department of Language and Linguistic Science.

Le Page, R.B., Christie, P., Jurdant, B., Weekes, A.J. and Tabouret-Keller,

A. 1974. 'Further report on the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities'. *Language in Society*, 3. London: Cambridge University Press. 1-32.

Le Page, R.B. and Tabouret-Keller, A. 1982. 'Models and stereotypes of ethnicity and of language'. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 3, no. 3. 161-192.

--------------------------------------. 1985. *Acts of Identity: Creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity*. Cambridge University Press.

Le Page, R.B., Tabouret-Keller, A., Maury, G., Diki-Kidiri, M., and Weekes, A.J. 1977. *Report to the D.G.R.S.T., Paris, on the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities, stage II: St. Lucia*. Mimeo: Department of Language, University of York, England. 149 pp.

Cassidy, F.G. and Le Page, R.B. 1961. 'Lexicographic problems of the Dictionary of Jamaican English'. *Creole Language Studies II*, ed. by R.B. Le Page. London: Macmillan. 17-36.

-------------------------------. 1967. *Dictionary of Jamaican English*. London: Cambridge University Press.

-------------------------------. 1980. *Dictionary of Jamaican English*. Second (revised) edition. London: Cambridge University Press.

Evans, P.C.C. and Le Page, R.B. 1968. *The education of West Indian immigrant children*. London: National Council for Commonwealth Immigrants. 24 pp.

McEntegart, D. and Le Page, R.B. 1982. 'An appraisal of the statistical techniques used in the sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities'. *Sociolinguistic variation in speech communities*, ed. by Suzanne Romaine. London: Edward Arnold. 105-124.

Sebba, M. and Le Page, R.B. 1983. Report on a pilot study of schoolchildren in two London boroughs. Language Department, University of York: mimeo.

Tabouret-Keller, A. and Le Page, R.B. 1971. 'L'enquête sociolinguistique à grande echelle. Un exemple: sociolinguistic survey of multilingual communities, Part I: British Honduras survey.' *La Linguistique* (Paris) 6. 103-118.

-----------------------------------------. 1983. 'A longitudinal study of the extension of the use of 'Creole' and its relation to Belizean identity in Cayo District, Belize'. *Studies in Caribbean Language*, ed. by Lawrence Carrington. St. Augustine, Trinidad: Society for Caribbean Linguistics. 277-299.

-----------------------------------------. 1986. 'The mother-tongue metaphor'. N. Denison, K. Sornig et al. eds., *Muttersprache(n)*. Graz: Grazer Linguistische Studien, vol 27, pp 249-259.

FESTSCHRIFT

R B LE PAGE

# THE UNREALITY OF QUANTITATIVE FIGURES

Darwish G. Al-Amadidh
(Qatar University)

In the past two decades a number of quantitative studies have succeeded in exploring the systematic relationships between the sociocultural organization and patterns of language use. The main assumption behind this approach has been the fact that speakers functioning as members of a particular group in a particular society have internalized the appropriate rules of speech usage, in addition to the rules of grammar, that are widely shared and used by other members of the group. In other words speech behaviour reflects the basic categories of social structure of the community. Therefore any full account of language behaviour should be integrated with other kinds of social behaviour and interaction (Lyons 1978).

Such systematic links were arrived at by correlating average group scores for sociolinguistic variables with one or more nonlinguistic variables. For example, Labov's original and pioneer study (1963) on the centralization in the first element of the diphthong (aw) in Martha's Vineyard revealed that the degree of the centralization is closely linked with the speaker's sense of identity with the values and norms of the local community vis-a-vis the norms and values of the mainland i.e. summer people. The correlation between socio-economic class and linguistic variables found in Labov (1966), Trudgill (1974), Wolfram (1969) to mention a few. Milroy (1980) showed a close relationship between the social network which the speaker is engaged in and the pattern of language use. Holes (1981), working on the Bahraini dialect, found an interesting correlation between speaker's sect and the realization of some variables. In these investigations social variables are regarded as independent and linguistic variables to be dependent. This approach has played an important role in revealing an extraordinary structure which otherwise would not have emerged. A classic example of this is the position of the post-vocalic (r) in New York City (Labov 1966).

Most of the quantitative studies, however, followed Labov's pioneer study in which he remarkably showed 'that variation and fuzziness are amenable to strict observation and statistical analysis' (Aitchison 1981: 53-4). Looking at it from a different angle we may say that these studies have reflected the social dialects in terms of the relative use of the same linguistic features which serve to characterize different groups of speakers.

Sociolinguists have come to accept the fact that the patterns revealed in these quantitative investigations reflect a desire on the part of each group of speakers to assert its separate identity distinct from other groups in the community. The findings of many of these studies have been accepted as interesting and sometimes as dogmas, without questions as to their validity and significance, although in the majority of these studies very much remains to be said about individual differences within each group. In fact some investigators completely ignore the role of individuals on the ground that the aim is to arrive at a neat pattern of group behaviour. For example Macaulay writes:

> 'the existence of difference among individuals in each population should not be allowed to obscure the extent to which this cultural

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 33-48
© the author

identification, including its linguistic manifestations is a group phenomenon.' (1981:142)

Others have suggested that we must distinguish between group practices which typify groups of speakers and individual actions and behaviour. In other words, any member of the group may or may not conform to the pattern of the group (Downes 1984). This has been the line of approach, although we accept that every individual creates his unique system of behaviour, including speech, so as to resemble the group or groups which he wishes to be identified with (Milroy and Margrain 1978).

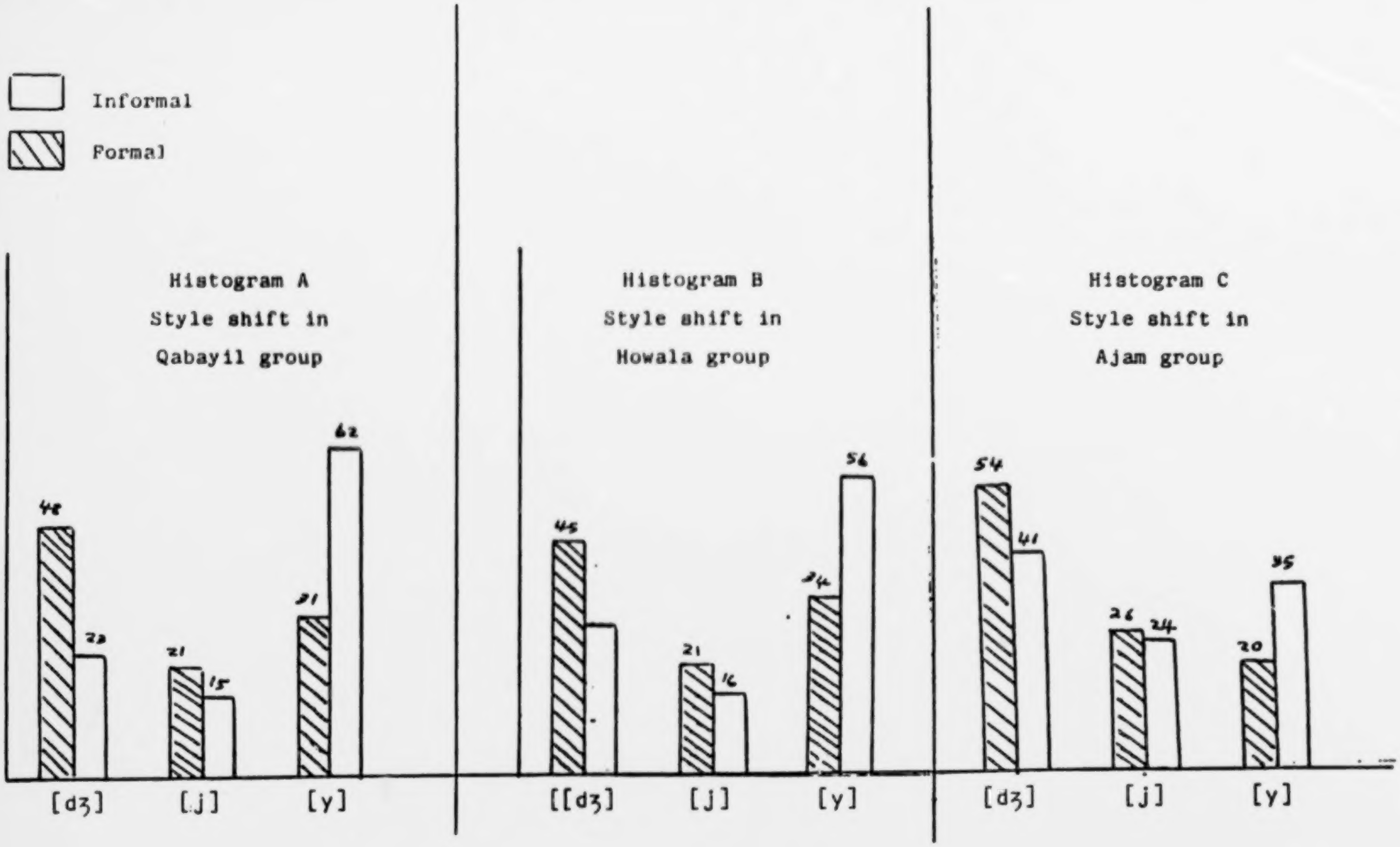
This raises an interesting and challenging question: if a group score or mean does not reflect the behaviour of individuals who constitute that group, then what does it reflect? If the aggregated figure of the group has reality in any sense, it must reflect the behaviour of the vast majority of its members. Thus looking at the aggregated figure of the group vis-à-vis the figures of the individual speakers may tell us a great deal about the significance of the group score. It may also reveal some aspects of the behaviour of the group in general.

The discrepancies between the aggregated figures and individual figures is the essence of this article. I will discuss the theoretical implication or implications for a situation where there is a sharp difference between the individual speech behaviour and the norm of the group behaviour as reflected in the aggregated figures; I will discuss the possible reasons that may lead to such differences and whether we can diminish such discrepancies or not within the existing approach of dealing with variation.

The data for this study come from 33 Qatari male speakers recorded in structural interviews. They represent three social groups namely, Qabayil (tribals), Howala (Returnees) and Ajam (Persians). Each group is represented by two age groups: old (above 50) and young (25-35); and the latter represents three educational groups: University graduates, secondary school graduates and primary school graduates. Formal and informal speech of each informant was recorded (for more details see Al-Amadidhi 1986, Chapter 2).

The linguistic variable under study is the voiced alveolar-palatal affricate (dʒ). In an earlier study (Al-Amadidhi, 1985) three variants were isolated for this variable namely [dʒ], (voiced alveolar - palatal affricate), [J] (voiced palatal fricative) and [y] (voiced palatal approximant). It was found that the [J] variant was constant across all the subgroups and did not carry any social value. In fact, people do not distinguish between [dʒ] and [J]. For them they are all cases of [dʒ]. The remaining variables carry social meanings. The [y] variant is the local pronunciation of the (dʒ) variable, whereas [dʒ] is the pronunciation of the superimposed variety i.e. Classical Arabic. Thus an increase in the [y] variant would entail a decrease in the realization of the [dʒ] variant and vice-versa. For these factors and to avoid complications, I will present here the figures for the [y] variant only when discussing the behaviour of individuals within each group.

The following histograms represent the realization of the [dʒ] variable in the speech of the three social groups in formal and informal styles.



Style shift in the three social groups

Table A

The style shift in the speech of members of Qabayil group

| | | Informant | Percentage of [Y] Variant | | Degree of Shift | Group Shift Vs. Individual Shift |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Formal | Informal | | |
| Young | University Graduate | 1 | 32% | 77% | 45% | + 14 |
| | | 2 | 6% | 6% | Zero | - 31 |
| | | 3 | 30% | 67% | 37% | + 6 |
| | High School Graduate | 4 | 12% | 60% | 48% | + 17 |
| | | 5 | 33% | 20% | - 13%* | Opposite |
| | | 6 | 0% | 58% | 58% | + 27 |
| | Primary Education | 7 | 42% | 78% | 36% | + 5 |
| | | 8 | 37% | 73% | 36% | + 5 |
| Old | | 9 | 71% | 80% | 9% | - 22 |
| | | 10 | 58% | 77% | 19% | - 12 |
| | | 11 | 80% | 89% | 9% | - 22 |

Group shift average is 31%

Table B

The style shift in the speech of members of Howale group

|  |  | Informant | Percentage of [Y] Variant |  | Degree of Shift | Group Shift Vs. Individual Shift |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | Formal | Informal |  |  |
| University Graduate | Young | 1 | 2% | 31% | 29% | + 7 |
|  |  | 2 | 21% | 22% | 1% | - 21 |
|  |  | 3 | 8% | 46% | 38% | + 16 |
| High School Graduate |  | 4 | 35% | 24% | - 11% | Opposite |
|  |  | 5 | 15% | 64% | 49% | + 27 |
| Primary Education |  | 6 | 16% | 36% | 20% | - 2 |
|  |  | 7 | 9% | 18% | 9% | - 13 |
|  | Old | 8 | 70% | 72% | 2% | - 20 |
|  |  | 9 | 74% | 84% | - 10% | Opposite |
|  |  | 10 | 85% | 91% | 6% | 16 |

Group shift average is 22%

increase of [Y] variant

Table C

The style shift in the speech of members of the Ajam group

| | | Informant | Percentage of [Y] Variant | | Degree of Shift | Group Shift Vs. Individual Shift |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Formal | Informal | | |
| University Graduate | Young | 1 | 1% | 16% | 15% | Zero |
| | | 2 | 3% | 51% | 48% | + 33 |
| | | 3 | 0% | 7% | 7% | - 8 |
| High School Graduate | | 4 | 12% | 5% | - 7% | Opposite |
| | | 5 | 34% | 32% | 2% | - 13 |
| | | 6 | 0% | 42% | 42% | + 27 |
| Primary Education | | 7 | 31% | 33% | 2% | - 13 |
| | | 8 | 14% | 24% | 10% | - 5 |
| | | 9 | 25% | 43% | 18% | + 3 |
| | Old | 10 | 46% | 65% | 19% | + 4 |
| | | 11 | 28% | 32% | 4% | - 1 |
| | | 12 | 61% | 49% | * | Opposite |

Group shift average is + 15

Looking at histograms a, b and c, we notice an increase in the standard variant [dʒ] as we move towards formal style. Simultaneously there is a considerable decrease in the realization of the localized variant [y] . These histograms reflect patterns of style shifting reported in most of the studies (Labov 1966, Macaulay 1976, Abdel-Jawad 1981, Shorrab 1981, Schmidt 1975 etc.). They support the findings of the majority of sociolinguistic studies, namely that the localized variant decreases as the context becomes more formal.

But the essential question is how far these patterns of style shifting are true of the members of each group? In other words, do all members of any group shift to the same degree as indicated by the histograms? Do they shift in the same direction? If the answer is positive, then it will be a great boost to the validity and significance of the patterns reflected in the histograms. We can be confident that group scores or the aggregated figures of the group have reality and do in fact reflect the behaviour of the members of the group. If, on the other hand, the answer is negative, serious consequences will follow as to the significance of these figures. To investigate this point, I will examine and compare the style shift in the speech of each individual within each group with the style shift of the group in general as reflected in the histograms. These are represented in Tables a, b and c.

Comparing the average score of the Ajam group (Histogram C) with the style shift in the twelve members of the group (Table C) many points are evident. Not all individuals shift to the same degree. The 15% shift as indicated in the histogram is an artefact of the system i.e. an aggregated figure. In fact, looking closely at the comparison, we realize that only a limited minority of individuals in the group shift in this way and to the same extent - (Speakers No. 1, 8, 9, 10). Some exhibit style shift to a much greater degree (Speakers No. 2, 6); some hardly show any (Speaker No. 7). Two speakers (Nos. 5, 12) unexpectedly shift in the opposite direction i.e. as the context becomes more formal, the realization of the localized variant [y] is increased. Similar discrepancies are also evident when we compare Histograms a) and b) with tables a. and b. respectively.

However, it is well-known that variation of this kind is influenced by various factors of which style is only one. These factors interact in a complicated manner to produce variations. Therefore it is quite possible that within the Ajam group, for example, those who display a different pattern of style shift belong to different sub-groups, i.e. educated vs uneducated or old vs young etc. Thus if we consider the speech of the individuals who form a homogeneous sub-group within this group in terms of various social factors such as university graduates, we may find that their speech and pattern of style shifting are quite similar and distinct from other sub-groups in the sample.

In Table C every three consecutive speakers form a homogeneous sub-group in terms of age, level of education, and of course tribe. Thus speakers 1, 2 and 3 are young with university level of education; speakers 4, 5 and 6 are young and high school graduates; speakers 7, 8 and 9 young with primary level of education; and finally speakers 10, 11 and 12 are old and illiterate.[1]

Taking the first sub-group (speakers 1, 2 and 3) the inconsistency in style shifting is evident. One shifts to a large degree (speaker 29 whereas another one just shows shift (speaker 3); speaker 1 shifts to the same degree (as indicated by the group pattern in Histogram C). They exhibit quite different realizations of the (dʒ) variable in the two styles although, theoretically, they should be similar for they are equal in terms of social variables. They are from the same ethnic group, same age group and all of them are university graduates. Once again the pattern of style shift as indicated by the aggregated figure i.e. the histogram, is no guide to the pattern of style shift of this sub-group nor to any other sub-group within the group. Similar discrepancies are also noticeable in other sub-groups. (Sharp cases are circled on the table.) The picture is very much the same when we compare the behaviour of each sub-group in the other two ethnic groups.

Some previous studies have explained certain cases of individual deviation. For instance Labov (1963) noticed an interesting case of one youth who became markedly more Vineyarder after he had returned to his homeland, having attended a college on the mainland. In fact he used the non-standard variant even more frequently than the most traditional local speakers. This was interpreted as a way of rejecting the values of the mainland by becoming one of the Islanders i.e. speaking in the same way.

But the charts and the histograms show that it is not a matter of one or two individual speakers deviating from the norm of the group. Rather, there is a considerable difference between the aggregated group figure and the behaviour of the majority of the individuals in the group. Therefore partial treatment of isolated cases is not enough. We must go much further and find some explanation for this type of constant discrepancy between the group figure and individual behaviour.

Generally speaking, the traditional Labovian approach has concentrated on the aggregated group figures to arrive at a regular pattern of variation in the community. It involves dividing informants into various groups. It is also understood that informants in any group such as young, female, working-class, represent a homogeneous group. But as a matter of fact they do not form such a group, for variation in individual competence-performance, along with variations in settings of interactions, and in characteristics of the participants, interact in various ways to produce a wide range of variation even in what is expected to be homogeneous group, as was indicated in the data presented earlier (Grimshaw 1981).

The traditional quantitative approach initiated by Labov regards people as static i.e. once they are part of a group, they are expected to behave in a certain way. For example, people are assigned to different socio-economic classes according to factors such as income, education, occupation etc., regardless of their sense of identity. That is to say, without considering the willingness on the part of the speaker(s) to be identified with X social class. For it is quite possible to have two speakers A and B who categorically belong to the same social group (X), yet their attitudes and sense of identity are different, i.e. A wishes to be identified with group X, whereas B considers himself to be part of group Y. Therefore their pattern of language use will change accordingly. They will adopt different verbal strategies and will respond differently to the norm enforcement mechanism of the group to which they have been attached according to the static categories. In other words A who identifies himself with the group will respond positively to the norms of the group, whereas B who dissociates himself from the group will react in a negative manner and away from such norms. For 'each individual creates the system of his verbal behaviour so that he shall resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time, he may wish to be identified.' (Le Page et al, 1974, 2). According to the theory of acts of identity, social categories such as sex, age, ethnic group, social class etc., will influence one's speech only to the extent that they represent social groups with which one wants to identify oneself (Hudson 1980). Therefore the more one is anxious to identify oneself with a particular group or to dissociate oneself from it, the more significant for one becomes the question of language as an indication of group loyalty or disaffection.

Such problems arise simply because we take social groups as the starting point of our investigation rather than the reverse i.e. taking individuals as the starting point and then looking for a social tag which unites the individuals with similar pattern of language use.

> 'There is no reason why single speaker output should be viewed as unstructured and unworthy of study. In fact, Bickerton, Le Page and Gumperz all take the individual as the basis of their descriptions of variation, principally because of the difficulty of defining corporate group boundaries.' (Milroy 1980, 133)

This leads to the other problem, namely that the quantitative approach regards social variables as discrete, although social notions are more like a continuum. When informants are divided into various socio-economic classes, for example, the implication is that each class is a separate entity. But in reality we find that within each class there is a great deal of nonuniformity when assigning informants to the group, i.e. some are truer representatives of the class than others; some will be at the peripheral zones of the group while others will be at the centre. All of these speakers will be regarded as equal parts of the same socio-economic class. Similar points may be made about other social variables.

It may appear that this point is irrelevant when we consider ethnic groups. For either a person is a member of the group or he is not. But even here the matter is not so simple, for there will be speakers who according to our criteria, such as colour, may be assigned to one particular group, yet their own sense of identity is at conflict with that of the group. In the end we have to say that it is not a question of whether one is or is not a member of a group on theoretical bases but rather one's willingness to be identified with the group or not, i.e. self-ascription is more relevant than the observer's allocation.

Another factor which may be responsible for the discrepancies noted earlier is the fact that most of the studies consider only a very limited number of social variables. For as we consider more of these variables we have two options either to increase the total number of informants in the study or to be content with a smaller number of informants in each cell. Generally speaking a limited number of these variables is considered in order to have a reasonable number of informants in each cell. But by adopting such strategies are we not overlooking the fact that human beings have versatile abilities to identify themselves with unlimited numbers of groups in the society? Of course some groups are more prominent than others to the investigator which need not be the case for the informants. Each one of us responds to numerous external factors which cannot be systematically accounted for, otherwise the sample will be too large and will take a very long time to analyse. Even if we consider a large sample it doesn't guarantee that we have covered all the relevant social factors, simply because they are quite unlimited. In fact, in some of the more recent studies new factors, which were not considered in the previous studies, were found to be significant in explaining linguistic variation. L. Milroy (1980) in her study in Belfast reports that two female speakers were of similar age, socio-economic class and were living in the same area, yet their language showed consistent differences on many linguistic variables. This was due to the different network systems the two were engaged in.

A final factor could be the question of accommodation which has not been thoroughly investigated. We know that a proper conversation is an interactional process in which speakers are continually reassessing the social context and adjusting their speech to produce a speech which will reflect their attitudes (Cheshire 1982). In other words, in any verbal interaction a certain degree of accommodation takes place. Thus we change the pattern of our speech to be more like or more different from our interlocutors. Which strategy we adopt depends on our attitudes towards them. If we like them we tend to be more similar in the speech pattern we produce and vice versa (Giles and Smith 1979). Abdel Jawad (1981), in his study on the Jordanian Arabic, reports that better-educated villagers feel a need to switch from fairly localized non-standard linguistic code in relaxed circumstances to a more standard speech variety in the presence of their educational equivalents.

Another example of this process could be seen in Labov (1969) in which the child Leon who was almost speechless when interviewed on his own, showed rich verbal capacity when certain changes occurred in the context one of which was the presence of one of his friends. It is also equally true that different speakers show different levels of accommodation in the same context. There is no guarantee, in fact, why there should be any, that all informants in a designated group accommodate their speech in the same way or to the same degree. The impact of this factor remains to be investigated systematically.

## Implications for Variable Rules

Variable Rules were developed as a modification of the optional rules found in Transformational Generative Grammar which regarded variation as an optional exercise and labelled it 'free variation'. Sociolinguists dealing with variation firmly believe that variability in primary data cannot be dismissed entirely as belonging to the realm of performance, but must, in one way or another, reflect what the speaker knows about his language without denying that some variability will inevitably occur as a result of idiosyncratic usages of the linguistic system. This has led to various attempts to incorporate variation into the grammar and to write rules that generate, at least, part of the observed variation. One such attempt was the idea of Variable Rules.

Variable Rules were first developed in connection with the contraction and deletion of the copula in Black English Vernacular (BEV) (Labov 1969a, 73b and c). The relative regularity of the contracted forms of is/are and the following phonological environment as well as the fact that the same phonological environments are at work for all the sub-groups, have led Labov to introduce the variable rules to replace optional rules in cases such as contraction of copula in BEV. Variable rules, however, are intended to replace most of the optional rules, particularly the ones which seem to be constrained by linguistic and non-linguistic elements. They are really a sociolinguistic attempt to state and incorporate sociological generalization in generative grammar. They indicate a set of more-or-less relations and can be seen as an extension of the orthodox optional rules. They state such rules in the form of a statement which introduces probabilities: rule X occurs at a certain frequency or freqencies according to the presence or absence of factors a,b,c... In fact we may say that variable rules do no more than summarize general trends found in groups and present them in statistical form (Wardhaugh 1986). They are also meant to reflect, in the apparently idiosyncratic usages of the individual speaker, indicators not of his individuality but of his group affiliation (Bell, 1976). This is reflected in the social constraints stated in the rules. I do not intend to repeat the criticisms launched at the notion of variable rule. But interested readers could refer to the following: Bickerton (1971), Bailey (1973), Macaulay (1976), (the acquisition of variable rules); Kay and McDaniel (1979), Romaine (1981), (departure from T.G.C. framework); Romaine (1980) (sound change and incompatibility with variable rules). However, in this part I will concentrate on the nature and viability of social constraints.

Variable rules are meant to be a part of 'community grammar' rather than a part of individual competence, otherwise speakers could not conceivably keep track of the frequencies of the linguistic variables in their speech relative to the realizations of the same variables in the speech of other members of the society. Thus some parts of the constraints are stated in terms of social categories such as socio-economic class, sex, age etc. These constraints are looked upon as having some reality. In other words, a change in one of these constraints would entail and imply a change in the frequency of a variant, i.e. application of the rule. These constraints also imply that speakers of the same social category would apply the rule to a similar extent. The degree of their application of the rule will be different from speakers from another social category. Let us see how far this is true of the data.

In the previous study (Al-Amadidhi 1985), the (dʒ) variable was found to be influenced by the following factors: tribe, age, level of education and the level of formality. Thus we may write the following tentative variable rule for the realization of (dʒ) in Qatari Arabic

$$(\text{dʒ}) \rightarrow \langle y \rangle \qquad \begin{bmatrix} \text{tribe} \\ \text{age} \\ \text{education} \\ \text{formality} \end{bmatrix}$$

This rule reads that (dʒ) is variably realized as [y] according to the social factors mentioned in the rule. Thus we expect that speakers from the same tribe, same age group and with similar level of education, speaking in the same context, to apply the rule, more or less, to the same degree. In other words, speakers who apply the rule to the same extent are expected to be of the same social group. Let us check this supposition against the actual figures in the data. The following table groups speakers according to their application of the rule in the informal style. The table shows quite clearly that the predictive value of the rule is true of none of the groups. All groups have speakers from diverse sub-groups. Group B, for instance, includes two old speakers from the Howala group, two old speakers from the Qabayil group and three young speakers from the latter tribe. They are of different educational levels, i.e. one is a university graduate while the other two have primary level of education. According to the rule this mixture should not occur. Speakers in their usage of the variable should be stratified according to factors such as the level of education. All other groups include speakers from different sub-groups as can be detected from the table. Now let us examine the data from a different angle. We shall look at the realization of the [y] variant in the informal style in the speech of university graduates in Qabayil group, which is theoretically supposed to be a homogeneous group. Here are the figures:

| Speaker No. | Percentage of [y] in informal style |
|---|---|
| 1 | 6% |
| 2 | 67% |
| 3 | 77% |

Speaker No. 1 shows a very low percentage of the [y] variant in his speech in this style, while the other members of this sub-group have a relatively high proportion of the variant in the same context. In fact the pattern of speech of speaker No. 1 is more similar to speakers Nos. 1, 3 (Chart C) who are members of a different ethnic group but who are of the same age group and with similar level of education.

We have noticed that the predictive value of the social constraints is quite low. There are wide discrepancies between the speech pattern of an individual speaker and the pattern predicted by the rule. This is because people are different and even speakers of a very similar social background, even from the same family, may show different patterns of language use; and their abstract position in the social hierarchy in relation to the rest of the society would mean very little in terms of language use. It is true that the procedure of isolating the various social factors and correlating them with the linguistic variables had reflected social reality of the language use, to a certain extent and has helped to better understanding of the nature of variation observed in a large sample of speakers. But one must not lose sight of the fact that notions such as socio-economic class are abstract

Tabulating of speakers according to their application

of the rule in informal style

| | Speaker No. | Percentage of [Y] | Tribe | Age | Level of Education | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 1 | 91 | H | Old | - | 89-100 |
| | 2 | 89 | Q | Old | - | |
| B | 3 | 80 | Q | Old | - | 80-70 |
| | 4 | 78 | Q | Young | Primary | |
| | 5 | 77 | Q | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| | 6 | 77 | Q | Old | - | |
| | 7 | 74 | H | Old | - | |
| | 8 | 73 | Q | Young | Primary | |
| | 9 | 72 | H | Old | - | |
| C | 10 | 67 | Q | Young | Univ. Grad. | 69-60 |
| | 11 | 65 | A | Old | - | |
| | 12 | 64 | H | Young | High School | |
| | 13 | 60 | Q | Young | High School | |
| D | 14 | 58 | Q | Young | High School | 59-50 |
| | 15 | 51 | A | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| E | 16 | 49 | A | Old | - | 49-40 |
| | 17 | 46 | H | Young | Primary | |
| | 18 | 43 | A | Young | Primary | |
| | 19 | 42 | A | Young | High School | |
| F | 20 | 36 | H | Young | Primary | 39-30 |
| | 21 | 33 | A | Young | Primary | |
| | 22 | 32 | A | Young | High School | |
| | 23 | 32 | A | Old | - | |
| | 24 | 31 | H | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| G | 25 | 24 | A | Young | High School | 29-20 |
| | 26 | 24 | A | Young | Primary | |
| | 27 | 22 | H | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| | 28 | 20 | Q | Young | High School | |
| H | 29 | 18 | H | Young | Primary | 19-10 |
| | 30 | 16 | A | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| I | 31 | 7 | A | Young | Univ. Grad. | 9-0 |
| | 32 | 6 | Q | Young | Univ. Grad. | |
| | 33 | 5 | A | Young | High School | |

Q = Qabayil (Tribals)
H = Howala (Returnees)
A = Ajam (Persians)

entities. In fact, 'membership of a group labelled "lower class" does not necessarily form an important part of person's definition of social identity'. (Milroy 1980, 14).

It may be said that variable rules were proposed as a part of community grammar. Therefore, it needn't be true of all members of the community. Then what is the point of having a rule without knowing the proportion of speakers to whom it would apply. This would also raise the question of the learnability of this kind of rule and that variable rules are too powerful, i.e. they are not falsifiable, and therefore have no predictive power (Romaine 1981).

The notion of variable rules is an attempt to account for the variability found in the data. But a great deal of this variation, for instance variation within each group, is still very much idealized. Bearing in mind that the Chomskyan approach in dealing with variation was rejected as an idealized system, are we not doing just the same thing but on a smaller scale? Within the former approach variation was abstracted out in order to get at the essential properties of the language system; in the latter, i.e. Labovian approach, individual differences within each group are ignored to arrive at a neat pattern of language use across various groups. But many cracks could be noticed in this neat pattern once we examine closely the behaviour of members of a particular group or sub-group. For variable rules are a mathematical formalization of the quantitative relations discovered in the aggregated data.

## Conclusion

We must realize that the individual speaker lives in a multi-dimensional set of relationships to the various groups within his community. Therefore he is subject to all sorts of conflicting pressures derived from the social symbolism of different variants. His idiolect not only reflects his unique position in relation to the purely structural heterogeneity of the language system, but also his particular relationship to the normative pressure exerted by the different groups or sub-groups in the society (Downes, 1984).

The system of analysing variation may be improved if we concentrate on the function of language use as a symbol of personal identity, which is proposed by Le Page and many social psychologists. Le Page, for instance, tries to explain the linguistic behaviour of individuals by examining the nature of the social and psychological space within which they live. He says:

> 'in order to do sociolinguistics properly - that is, in order to understand social and concomitant linguistic processes (controlling) acts of identity - we must go deeper than either Marx or Labov and discover those basic human and social needs which motivate all forms of individual and social behaviour and the mediating role of language.'
>
> (Le Page 1979: 176)

I am not advocating that sociolinguistic studies adopting the technique of comparing the average group figures are, in any way, invalid. On the contrary, it was through this method that a great deal of unexplained linguistic phenomena were shown to be systematic. But nontheless, it is equally true that we have not yet developed a technique to deal with and explain the variation that occurs within each group. The individual linguistic behaviour is influenced by so many different elements and isolating a few of them will not give full insight into such a complex process. Perhaps that is why social constraints on the variable rule do not control the variable in the way they are supposed to.

1. Classification according to the level of education for the old group was not possible, as formal education in Qatar started 1951.

## References

Abdel-Jawad, H.R. (1981) Lexical and phonological variation in Spoken Arabic in Amman. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Pennsylvania.

Aitchison, J. (1981) Language Change: Progress or Decay? Fontana, London.

Al-Amadidhi, D. (1985) Lexical and Sociolinguistic Variation in Qatari Arabic. Unpublished thesis, University of Edinburgh.

Bailey, C.J. (1973) Variation and Linguistic Theory. Centre for Applied Linguistics.

Bell, R.T. (1976) Sociolinguistics. Batsford, London.

Bickerton, D. (1971) Inherent Variability and Variable Rules. Foundations of Language 7, pp. 457-92.

Cheshire, J. (1982) Variation in an English Dialect. Cambridge, CUP.

Downes, W. (1984) Language and Society. Fontana, London.

Giles and Smith (1979) Accommodation theory: Optimal levels of convergence in Giles and St. Clair (eds.) pp 45-65.

Grimshaw (1981) Language and Social Resource. Stanford University Press, California.

Holes, C.D. (1981) A sociolinguistic study of the Arabic-speaking speech community of Bahrain: language variation in relation to sect membership, region and literacy. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge.

Hudson, R.A. (1980) Sociolinguistics. CUP, Cambridge.

Kay, P. and McDaniel, C.K. (1979) On the logic of variable rules. Language in Society 8, pp. 151-87.

Labov. W. (1963) The social motivation of a sound change. Word. Vol. 19, pp. 273-309.

Labov. W. (1966) The Social Stratification of English in New York City. Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington D.C.

Labov. W. (1969a) Contraction, deletion and inherent variability of the English Copula. Language 45, pp. 715-62.

Labov, W. (1969b) The logic of non-standard English in Giglioli, P.P. (ed.) pp. 179-216.

Labov. W. (1972a) Sociolinguistic Patterns. Blackwell, Oxford.

Labov. W. (1972b) Language in the Inner City. University of Pennslyvania Press, Philadelphia.

Labov. W. (1972c) Negative attraction and negative. Language 48. pp. 773-819.

Le Page, R.B. et al (1974)
Le Page, R.B., Christie, P., Jurdant, B., Weekes, A.J., and Tabouret-Keller, A. Further report on the sociolinguistic survey of Cayo District British Honduras. Language in Society 3, pp. 1-32.
Le Page, R.B. (1979) Rev. of Dell Hymes 'Foundations in sociolinguistics: an othnographic approach' and of Dittmar, N. 'A critical survey of sociolinguistics: theory and application'. Journal of Linguistics 15, pp. 168-179.
Lyons, J. (1978) Foreword to the British edition of sociolinguistic patterns Labov. W. xi-xxiii. Blackwell, Oxford.
Milroy, L. (1980) Language and Social Network. Blackwell, Oxford.
Milroy, L. and Margrain, S. (1978) Vernacular Language Loyalty and Social Network in Belfast Working Papers in Language and Linguistics 3, pp. 1-58.
Macaulay, R.K.S. (1976) Social class and language in Glasgow. Language in Society 5, pp. 173-188.
Macaulay, R.K.S. (1978) Variation and consistency in Glaswegian English in Trudgill Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English pp. 132-143. Arnold.
Romaine, S. (1980) What is speech community? Belfast Working Papers in Language and Linguistics 4, pp. 41-59.
Romaine, S. (1981) The status of variable rules in sociolinguistic theory. Journal of Linguistics 17, pp. 93-119.
Schmidt, R.W. (1975) Sociostylistic variation in spoken Egyptian Arabic: examination of the concept of Diglossia. Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University.
Shorrab (1981) Models of socially significant linguistic variation: the case of Palestinian Arabic. Ph.D. thesis, State University of New York at Buffalo.
Trudgill, P. (1974) The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich. CUP, Cambridge.
Wardhaugh, R. (1986) An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Basil Blackwell.

# ADDRESSEE-ORIENTED FEATURES IN SPOKEN DISCOURSE

Jenny Cheshire
(Birkbeck College, University of London)

## 1. Introduction

Several recent papers have analysed some linguistic features of English that express speakers' degree of commitment to the truth of what they are saying (see Stubbs, 1986; Coates, 1987, 1988; Holmes, 1987). The point has been made that despite the emphasis given in current linguistic theory to the expression of propositional thought, unqualified propositions are rarely heard in naturally occurring speech (see, for example, Coates, 1987: 113). A theory of natural language therefore needs to take account of a great deal more than the expression of propositions.

Lyons (1981) gives particular emphasis to the non-propositional aspect of language. He points out that it is crucial to incorporate in a theory of natural language the 'subjectivity of utterance': 'the locutionary agent's expression of himself in the act of utterance and the reflection of this in the phonological, grammatical and lexical structure of the utterance' (op. cit: 240). In particular, a theory of natural language meaning must account for the subjectivity of reference, deixis and modality (op. cit: 242). For Lyons, the 'self' is both logically and psychologically indistinguishable from 'the beliefs, attitudes and emotions of which it is the seat or location' (ibid). The work of Coates, Holmes and Stubbs on epistemic modality can be seen, within this perspective, as contributing to our understanding of the subjectivity of modality and as accounting for some of the linguistic resources that speakers of English use to express their beliefs and attitudes towards their utterances. However, there has been relatively little work to date on the linguistic resources that speakers use to express their emotional involvement in what they are saying, or that attempts to account for the subjectivity of reference or deixis.

This paper analyses three linguistic features (this, never and all) which are used in spontaneous conversation to express emotional involvement. All and never have a referential function, and this has both a referential and a deictic function; the paper is a preliminary attempt, therefore, at analysing the subjectivity of reference and deixis. The main focus, however, is on the way in which speakers use these features to express emotional involvement and to orient the discourse towards the addressee, by directly involving the addressee in what is being said. It will also be suggested that these three features can be markers of foregrounding in discourse, highlighting, or giving discourse prominence to, that part of the utterance with which they enter into construction.

## 2. Intensity

Labov (1984) uses the term 'intensity' to refer to the expression of emotional involvement in speech. There are, of course, many linguistic exponents of intensity. People express their emotional involvement in what they are saying by their use of intonation, stress, hesitations and pauses, as well as a range of lexical features. Some of these lexical features habitually occur outside clause structure, such as exclamations, interjections (My God! or Goodness!) and swearing. Within the clause structure of English, emotional involvement is perhaps most frequently expressed by intensifying adverbs (for example, really or very), many of which have now lost the lexical meaning that they once possessed.

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 49-63
© the author

There are other linguistic features, however, that are equally capable of expressing emotional involvement, though this function is often overlooked in linguistic analyses of English. This and the quantifiers all and never can be thought of as referring features, assigning definite or indefinite reference to the items with which they are in construction; but they can also express the emotional involvement of the speaker in what is being said, at the same time as orienting the discourse towards the addressee. They are of particular interest because the referential meaning that they indicate when they communicate intensity appears to be directly opposite to the referential meaning that they indicate when they do not communicate intensity. This in its non-intense uses assigns definite reference, but as a marker of intensity it assigns indefinite reference; all and never are traditionally analysed as assigning indefinite reference, but when they express intensity, they appear to assign definite reference. This semantic conflict serves a function in communication since, as we will see, it invites the addressee to become actively involved in interpreting the meaning of the items in the context in which they are used, and thereby to share, albeit vicariously, the emotional involvement of the speaker.

The analysis is based on a corpus of spontaneous conversation between working-class adolescents, recorded in adventure playgrounds in the town of Reading, in Berkshire. One drawback of working with corpus data, of course, is that it is not clear to what extent the analysis can be generalised to other varieties of English. Adolescents' language, in particular, is often distinctive (see, for discussion, Nordberg, 1987); and working-class speakers may use distinctive grammatical forms (for an analysis of some nonstandard grammatical features used by the speakers who participated in this study, see Cheshire, 1982). The features analysed in this paper are listed in some dictionaries as occurring in colloquial English (see, for example, the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary), which suggests that the usage described here may be widespread. The aim of this paper, however, is not to identify core features of English but to describe the way in which speakers make use of their language system in everyday communication; and for this purpose the advantages of analysing language that has been recorded in real-life settings far outweigh the problems of generalisation.

This, all and never as they occur in the Reading corpus have three things in common: firstly, they are used to foreground certain parts of the utterance, giving them discourse prominence; secondly, they express the speaker's subjective involvement in what is being said; and thirdly, they are specifically oriented towards the addressee. I will discuss this in section 3, and all and never in section 4; section 5 then illustrates the way in which these three features combine with other addressee-oriented items to fulfill specific communicative functions in spoken discourse.

## 3. This

### 3.1. Demonstrative this

This is usually analysed as a demonstrative feature, with definite reference (see, for example, Quirk et al., 1985). Demonstrative this occurs in examples 1 and 2 below: it is stressed, and in each case it refers to items that are known to both the speaker and the addressee:

1. You can have **this** one...I don't want it..I don't like the spearmint ones (Jeff)
2. **This** town, mate..it's a dump........there's nothing to do here (Benny)

Demonstrative this is a deictic term, encoding, with that, a distinction on a proximal and distal axis. Items qualified by this are near to the speaker, whereas items qualified by that are further away. This in example 1 can be seen as a 'gestural' deictic, in that the referent is clearly visible to the participants in the conversation ( it was a piece of chewing gum, held out in the speaker's hand). This in example 2 can then be seen as a 'symbolic' deictic, in that the addressee requires some knowledge of the time and place dimensions of the speech event in order to correctly interpret the utterance. Thus in example 2 the addressee needs to know that both the speaker and the addressee are in Reading, for this is the town that the speaker considers to be a dump. I was the addressee, and I did know where we were, of course. In both examples, using the deictic item this marks the referent as near to the speaker ; and a contrasting sentence with that rather than this would index the referent as further away from the speaker. In example 2, for instance, the referent would have to be a town that was different from the one which we were in at the time (see Levinson, 1983: 65, for discussion of the distinction between gestural and symbolic deixis).

### 3.2. This as a marker of foregrounding

As Stein ( in press) points out, it has long been recognised that spoken discourse is organised in terms of background and foreground, with different languages using different grammatical forms for these functions, depending on their linguistic structure. If examples 1 and 2 are contrasted with 3 and 4 below, it can be seen that in 3 and 4 this functions as a foregrounder, highlighting that part of the utterance with which it enters into construction:

3. My Uncle Derek went to see **this** lady about **this** job ( Lynne)
4. I was in **this** lady's house, up there (Ronny)

Here, this is unstressed and appears to assign indefinite rather than definite reference, referring to an item that is neither known to the addressee, nor identifiable from the physical surroundings in which the speaker and the addressee are situated. In other words, this seems to function neither as a gestural deictic nor as a symbolic deictic; and rather than being in structural opposition with that, as in examples 1 and 2, it appears to be in opposition with the indefinite determiner a. Lynne and Ronny could have said, respectively:

3a. My uncle Derek went to see **a** lady about **a** job
4a. I was in **a** lady's house .

By using an unexpected determiner, Lynne and Ronny foreground the referents which this qualifies, giving them discourse prominence. Sometimes the highlighted referent is a central topic in the discourse that follows: example 4, for instance, occurs in the opening clauses of the mini-narrative in Extract A below, where the lady is central to Ronny's story ( it is she who is naked in the bathroom of Ronny's friend's house).

Extract A :

1 **Do you know what happened to me** ?
2 I was in **this** lady' s house.. up there..**right**,
3 and her little girl.. **right**
4 she said take this up to my mum
5 so I was walking upstairs
6 she was in the bathroom
7 and I went in the door

8 and there she was
9 standing **completely** naked
10 **just** standing there

On other occasions, the items that are foregrounded by this are simply the first referents that are available. Example 3, for instance, occurs in the orientation section of a narrative (the narrative is given in full later, in section 5):

1. Oh..yeah..my brother..he went to work with my uncle..Derek
2. and..em.. anyway..my uncle Derek went in to see this lady about this job

Lady and job are, quite simply, the first nouns in these clauses that are not modified by a possessive and that are therefore available to be foregrounded by this. The topic of the narrative is an accident that befell Lynne's cousin while he was waiting for her uncle to finish talking to 'the lady'; and neither 'the lady' nor 'the job' are central to the story. In section 5 we will see that the function of this in utterances such as these is to attract the attention of the addressee in the orientation section of a narrative.

### 3.3. Speaker involvement

The use of indefinite this can foreground part of an utterance, then; but at the same time, it expresses the speaker's subjective involvement in what he or she is saying. Stein (in press) points out that the marking of foregrounding in spoken discourse is accompanied by a simultaneous marking of intensity, though the converse is not necessarily the case:

' Intensity...is arguably the subjective evaluational correlate to the objective phenomenon of a subdivision of background and foreground'.

It is well known that speakers sometimes choose a proximal deictic rather than the corresponding distal one, in order to convey their subjective involvement in what they are saying. An example that is often given is the pair of sentences below, from Clark (1974):

5. He came through a hard time last year
6. He went through a hard time last year

In sentence 5, the verb came expresses proximity to the speaker, and therefore sympathy with the person who had the hard time, whereas in sentence 6 the verb go expresses distance from the speaker, and is neutral regarding the speaker's feelings. The use of this to assign indefinite reference, then, is a further example of a deictic item being used to indicate proximity to the speaker and subjective involvement.

Several writers have pointed to the difficulty that this use of proximal deictics poses for linguistic analysis (see the discussion of 'empathetic' deixis in Lyons (1977: 677), and the discussion of 'emotional' deixis in Lakoff (1972). One of the problems in analysing 'empathetic' or 'emotional' this is that it is necessary to account for why, and how, the same linguistic feature can be used to assign unambiguously both definite and indefinite reference (see, for discussion, Wald, 1983). However, although in section 3.2. I said that this appears to mark indefinite reference, and that this conflicts with its function as a definite demonstrative feature, it is only an analysis that focuses on the propositional content of utterances that needs to consider 'emotional' this as a marker of indefinite reference. If, instead, the analysis focuses on the communicative function that this fulfills in spoken discourse, it becomes clear that there is little difference, in fact, between 'definite' and 'indefinite' this.

Examples 3 and 4 both occur as part of stories about events that took place in the past – in Lynne's story, it is her cousin's accident; in Ronny's story, it is his adventure in someone's house. Both speakers clearly locate the events in past time, using past tense verb forms to do so; in other words, they clearly locate the events as distant from the time and place coordinates of the moment of speaking. By using the proximal deictic this, however, Lynne and Ronny are able to metaphorically situate themselves within the coordinates of the events that they are reporting, indicating that it is from this perspective that they are reporting the events that took place. By metaphorically situating themselves within the story world that they are creating, they express their subjective involvement in what they are reporting.

Using this in these examples can be seen as a similar strategy to using the narrative present; speakers shift the coordinates of the moment of speaking in order to locate themselves as being directly involved in the events that are being reported. Alternatively, the speakers could be said to be bringing the time and place coordinates of the discourse event forward, to merge with the moment of speaking. Whichever way we look at it, the effect is the same: by using so-called indefinite this, speakers shift the coordinates of their utterance; and in this way, they clearly express their subjective involvement in the story that they are telling.

'Indefinite' this, then, is like 'definite' this in that it functions as a symbolic deictic, marking the referent as close to the speaker's time and place coordinates. But it differs from 'definite' this in that the marking is metaphorical, reflecting a shift in the time and place dimensions of the speech event; it should, perhaps, be considered as a symbolic deictic whose symbolism is at a more abstract level than it is in examples such as 3 and 4, above. Both symbolic and metaphorical deixis differ from gestural deixis (as in examples 1 and 2) in that since the referent is not visible, the addressee needs to have sufficient knowledge of the time and place dimensions of the speech event to be able to correctly interpret the utterance in which the deictic occurs. With 'definite' this, the speaker and the addressee can be assumed to share this knowledge, as we saw in section 3.2; but with 'indefinite' this, the addressee cannot necessarily be assumed to share the discourse perspective of the speaker, which is, of course, a highly subjective perspective. It is for this reason, however, that 'emotional', 'metaphorical' this functions as an addressee-oriented feature of spoken discourse.

### 3.4. Addressee-orientation

In order to properly interpret this when it is used as a straightforward deictic, with definite reference, addressees have to be able to locate its referent as close to the speaker. As we saw in section 3.1, with gestural deictics addressees can actually see the referent (in example 1 it was a piece of chewing gum held in the speaker's hand); and with symbolic referents addressees need to know the time and place dimensions of the speech event, in order to be able to correctly interpret the deictics of the utterance. There were no problems of interpretation with example 2, where the place dimension was clearly evident. In example 4, however – Ronny's utterance – the addressee's task in interpreting the referent of deictic this is more difficult. This lady, in Ronny's utterance, is not visible to the addressees, nor is she known to them, nor has she been previously mentioned. The addressees are therefore presented with what Schiffrin (1986) terms a 'cognitive processing task'; and the only way in which they can provide an interpretation for the use of this in Ronny's utterance is to put themselves in the same position as the speaker, adopting the same discourse perspective. This applies equally to this in Lynne's utterance (example 3).

By using this lady rather than simply a lady, therefore, Lynne and Ronny metaphorically invite their addressees to enter into their universe of discourse. Lynne and Ronny merge the time and place coordinates of the discourse with the time and place coordinates of the moment of speaking, as we have seen; and if we assume that they do not intentionally wish to mislead their addressees, then we have to conclude that they are inviting their addressees to share in this merger. In Brown and Levinson's terms, using this is a positive politeness device: it suggests that the speaker and the addressee share common assumptions and experiences, even though, in fact, they may not (see Brown and Levinson,1986).

'Indefinite' this, then, is like 'definite' this in that it is a symbolic deictic, requiring addressees to locate its referent as close to the speaker. Although I have been referring to this use as 'indefinite', in order to distinguish the use of this as a marker of foregrounding and of emotional involvement from its use as a demonstrative, it would be more accurate to say that the reference of this is always definite. The difference between the two uses of this is that the symbolism of this when it is a marker of foregrounding and of subjective involvement is at a more abstract level than when it is a straightforward deictic, as we saw in section 3.3. In both cases the referent is marked as proximal to the speaker, but when this is a marker of foregrounding the marking is metaphorical, and the addressee is invited to share the metaphorical interpretation. In other words, it is precisely because of the 'unmarked' deictic function of this that it is able to function as a very effective marker of foregrounding, and as a very effective addressee-oriented item.

## 4. Quantifiers as intensifiers

Quantifiers are frequently used to express intensity in spoken discourse; Labov (1984), for example, says that about half the intensifying features in his corpus of colloquial English are universal quantifiers. Like this, when quantifiers are used to express intensity their meaning often conflicts with the meaning that is assigned to them by sentence grammars.

### 4.1. Never as a marker of foregrounding

Sentence grammars usually see never as a member of a three-term series sometimes - ever - never. This analysis stems from Klima's classic analysis of negation in English (see Klima,1964), where never is classed as an indeterminate, like no-one and neither. As an indeterminate, it is assumed to express 'universal temporal negation' (see Labov, 1973), with a meaning that can be paraphrased as 'not on any occasion'. Similarly, Quirk et al (1985) class never as a temporal adverb, parallel to sometimes and ever, giving as illustrative examples the sentences below:

7. He sometimes visits us
8. He doesn't ever visit us
9. He never visits us

(Quirk et al, 1985: 783).

In everyday discourse, however, never frequently occurs without the meaning of universal temporal negation. In examples 10 - 12, for instance, never does not refer to 'any occasion': in example10 it refers to a specific point of past time (the moment when Lynne's cousin poked the stick in his eye), in example 11 it refers, similarly, to a specific point of past time, and in example 12, it refers to a period of future time. In none of these examples, then, does never have the meaning of 'universal temporal negation'; the reference is no longer indefinite (to all possible periods of time), but definite (to a specified period or point of time).

10. He was lucky he **never** lost his eye (Lynne)
11. He **never** told me! If I'd have known he's have run, I'd have run...right git (Dave)
12. You'll **never** do it mate..not if you do it like that (Alec)

Here, then, never cannot be analysed as an indeterminate, for there is no corresponding non-negative sentence with sometimes. Furthermore, never sometimes co-occurs with ever, thereby failing to conform to the three-term pattern, and failing to meet the defining criteria of an indeterminate:

13. Well, you might go down there, mate, but I've **never ever** been there and I'm not going either (Benny)

This use of never has been a source of considerable confusion to linguists who try to analyse it within the framework of a sentence-based grammar (see, for example, Labov, 1973). As Labov (op. cit.) points out, never in examples such as 10 and 11 appears to be related to didn't plus a following preterite verb form, as in 10a and 11a below, yet the rules by which the two forms can be related are not all easy to formalise:

10a. He was lucky he didn't lose his eye.
11a. He didn't tell me!

Similarly, Quirk et al (op. cit:601) give the following example of never used with future time reference:

14. You will never catch the train tonight

Their explanation for the occurrence of never with a non-universal meaning is that the presence of an adverbial referring to future time (tonight) 'rules out' the temporal meaning of never, so that never is a not a temporal adverb here, but a 'negative minimiser'. This explanation cannot account for most of the occurrences of never in my corpus, however. In example 12, for instance, there is no adverb that refers to future time; and in both examples 12 and 14, as well as in examples 10 and 11, the time reference of the utterance is indicated by other items (the preterite verb forms in 10 and 11, the adverbial tonight in 13, and the modal will in 12 and 14), as, of course, is normally the case in English (see Crystal, 1964).

Rather than seeing the non-universal sense of never as exceptional, and attempting to analyse it as a separate item from universal never, never can be seen as foregrounding that part of the utterance that comes within its scope, intensifying the force of the negation. Thus, in examples 10-12, the speakers have given discourse prominence, or emphasis, to the part of the utterance that comes within the scope of never, so that, for instance, the difference between 10 and 10a is that in 10, Lynne highlights the possibility of the eye having been lost. And in example 14, using the universal temporal negator similarly intensifies the negation of the proposition, in contrast with the less forcefully negated 14a:

14 a. You won't catch the train tonight

Even where never is an indeterminate, one of the three-term series sometimes -ever-never, it can still be seen as foregrounding the part of the utterance that falls within its scope, so that 9a, for instance, contrasts with the more forcefully negated 9:

9. He never visits us.
9a. He doesn't visit us.

Given an appropriate context, in other words, 9a can still have universal reference, even though the universal quantifier does not appear.

Seeing never simply as the negative member of a three-term series, as in the analyses of Klima and Quirk et al., misses the important function that never fulfills in English, as a marker of foregrounding, highlighting the negation of that part of the utterance that falls within its scope. Using a universal temporal negator to strengthen the force of negation is, of course, a common phenomenon in European languages, and it has been a favoured strategy in the history of English. Modern English no, for example, derives from Old English na, which itself derives from ne + a, 'not ever' (Jespersen, 1917: 18). Similarly, Modern English not derives from ne + a + wiht, 'not ever anything' (Traugott, 1972: 94). In present-day English not has lost its function of reinforcing, or foregrounding, the negation of the utterance in which it occurs; and the universal negator is now serving this function, as before.

### 4.2. All as a marker of foregrounding

A similar conflict exists between the meaning that sentence grammars assign to the quantifier all, and the meaning that all expresses when it is used in everyday discourse. Like never, all is usually considered to be a universal quantifier, with a meaning that can be paraphrased as 'the whole of', or 'every one'. There is a vast literature on the meanings of all and other English quantifiers (see, for example, Ioup, 1975; McCawley, 1977; Vendler, 1987); within this literature there is a preoccupation with the analysis of the scope of the quantifiers, particularly when they are modifiers of nouns, as in example 15:

15. All of the arrows didn't hit their targets (from Levinson,1983: 123)

Such problems, however, rarely arise when analysing utterances from everyday language. A problem that does arise, on the other hand, is that all frequently occurs with a meaning that cannot be paraphrased as 'the whole of'. Examples 16- 18 below illustrate this:

16. My mum was **all** crying (Lynne)
17. He was dressed **all** smart ( Benny)
18. He was being **all** big-headed ( Sharon)

Again, the use of all with a 'marked', non- universal meaning allows discourse prominence to be given to the adjectival forms with which it enters into construction ( crying, smart and big-headed, respectively). Similarly, in example 19 , the word all does not imply that Nobby's brother's entire hand was injured, or that his entire head was bleeding (this would, presumably, be physically impossible); again, all appears to simply foreground that part of the utterance with which it is in construction:

19. My brother had **all** his hand bashed up..**all** his head was bleeding (Nobby)

In example 20 there is the sense of quantification (' a large number of boxes' or ' a great deal of grease'); but this sense is certainly less than universal and, again, all appears to foreground that part of the utterance with which it is in construction:

20. There's **all** boxes and that..there's **all** grease ( Debbie)

Finally, consider examples 21and 22:

21. You gotta make **all** new friends ( Nobby)
22. And I got..I got **all** the bollockings for it..and there was him, laughing! (Dave)

Here it is possible that the sense of universal quantification is intended. In example 21, Nobby was explaining why he didn't want to move away from the road he lives in , despite the fact that there is nothing to do in the area. He may mean that if he moved, every friend that he would have, would have to be a new one; or he may simply be foregrounding his point that he would have to make new friends, in order to clearly express his reluctance to move away. Similarly, in example 22, Dave is referring to a shoplifting episode during which he was caught but his friend escaped. It may be the case that Dave was the only boy who got into trouble for the shoplifting episode; or he may simply be foregrounding the words within the scope of all , to emphasise the unfairness of what happened. It is pointless, however, to attempt to give a strict interpretation of the meaning of the quantifier; for in everyday discourse it is rarely important to communicate whether or not strict universality applies. It is far more important that Nobby communicates his reluctance to move away from his road, and that Dave communicates his feeling of having been treated unfairly, than it is for either of them to communicate unambiguously the truth value of what they are saying.

Both all and never, then, occur in English as universal quantifiers; and it is this use that has been given very detailed treatment in sentence grammars. But they also occur in everyday conversation with more restricted meanings, with a sense that appears to be less than, and sometimes directly opposite to, the meaning of universal quantification, and that as a result gives discourse prominence to that part of the utterance that falls within their scope.

There are clear parallels here with the use of this as a marker of foregrounding; in each case a single item appears to be used in English to assign both definite and indefinite reference. It seems that whenever a feature appears to have two contradictory meanings, we should be alerted to the possibility that the two apparently distinct senses are related, with one or both of them being available for foregrounding and for the expression of intensity.

### 4.3. Speaker involvement

Using a universal quantifier with a sense that is less than universal is, of course, an example of overstatement; and overstatement is a strategy which is very commonly used for intensifying the force of an utterance. Many of the more common English intensifiers are relatively empty of lexical content today, but have their origins in overstatement; consider, for example, adjectives such as awful, horrible, wonderful, or great.

The universal quantifiers are often analysed in terms of scalar implicatures: that is to say, they are seen as a member of an implicational scale, so that an utterance containing one item from the scale entails the items lower down on the scale. Examples of a few such scales are given below, from Levinson (1983.134):

< all, most, many, some, few >
< always, often, sometimes >
< excellent, good >

If someone says : this is excellent wine, they conversationally implicate this is good wine; if they say all the pets we have had have been a nuisance, this conversationally implicates some of the pets we have had have been a nuisance, and so on. Thus in examples 16-22 above, the speakers who used the universal quantifiers where the quantification involved was less than universal were not, in fact, making a cognitive contradiction; they were simply indulging in overstatement.

Using overstatement is a frequent way of expressing subjective involvement; for by choosing a word that communicates the highest point on a scale, the strength of a speaker's feelings can be very effectively communicated. Scalar implicatures are helpful in explaining why this is not a contradiction in terms, since they draw attention to the fact that universal quantifiers are at the high point of a scale, and that they conversationally implicate lower points on their scales.

### 4.4. Addressee-orientation

Again, the function of all and never as addressee-oriented items is directly related to the expression of speaker involvement. Items at the highest point on a scale conversationally implicate the lower points on the scale, but it is up to the addressee to determine whether or not the highest point on the scale can in fact apply. In some cases, a universal meaning is possible; this was so for all in example 21, as we saw in section 4.2, and for never in example 9 (reproduced below). In other cases, the linguistic context makes it clear that universality cannot apply, as in example 11, where the past tense verb form and the surrounding context clearly specify a moment of past time. And on other occasions, as in example 19, addressees have to use their knowledge of the world to decide on the degree of quantification that is entailed:

21. You gotta make **all** new friends ( Nobby)
9. He never visits us
11. He **never** told me! If I'd have known he's have run, I'd have run...right git (Dave)
19. My brother had **all** his hand bashed up..**all** his head was bleeding (Nobby)

In every case, speakers who use a universal quantifier indicate to their addressees that the intended scope of the quantifier is the widest possible within the linguistic and non-linguistic context in which it is used. As with this as a marker of foregrounding, using a universal quantifier communicates the subjective, emotional involvement of the speaker in the utterance whilst at the same time opening a processing task to the addressees, inviting them to identify the widest possible scope for the quantifier and thereby involving them directly in the creation of the universe of discourse.

Again, universal quantifiers can be seen as positive politeness devices. Brown and Levinson (1978: 122) see hedges such as sort of and kind of as positive politeness devices, because they leave it to the addressee to figure out the precise meaning of the word that they qualify. If a speaker says John's sort of nice, she is indicating that nice is a metaphor, and it is up to the addressee to decide exactly how to interpret it. Using sort of in this way implies that there is some common ground between the speaker and the addressee, and the speaker calls upon the addressee to use their common knowledge in order to interpret her attitude. In the same way, using a universal quantifier implies a common knowledge of the world and calls on the addressee to use this knowledge to determine the widest possible limits of universality that can apply. Like this, the universal quantifiers are metaphors, creating a joint focus of attention for the speaker and the addressee.

## 5. Addressee-oriented features in discourse

So far I have considered this, all and never in isolation, in order to show that a sentence-based grammar with its preoccupation with the expression of propositional thought cannot account for the way in which these items are used in everyday face-to-face discourse, where they express subjective involvement and orient the discourse towards their addressee. The function of quantifiers and intensifier this as addressee-oriented items, however, cannot be properly appreciated unless their use is seen within a wider context, as part of a pattern of addressee-oriented features in spoken discourse.

Extract B, below, is a narrative from the Reading corpus, where Lynne has the floor and the other people who are present listen. The addressee-oriented features are in bold type. They cluster in two places: in the opening sections of the narrative, and at the end. This is a very frequent pattern in the narrative sections of the recordings, and it serves a communicative function, as we will see.

Extract B :

Lynne: Well..I never have been in hospital to stay..not even one night
Mandy: Your brother has though Lynne..remember his eye
Lynne:
1. **Oh**..**yeah**..my brother..he went to work with my uncle..Derek..
2. and..em...**anyway**..my uncle Derek went in to see **this** lady about **this** job
3. and there were my cousin and my brother..
4. was playing with **these** sticks outside..
5 playing swords or summat..
6. and my cousin accidentally put them in his eye..
7. and his eye was hanging out
8. and he nearly lost it
9. he was lucky he still had his eye
10. because the lady who bandaged it up for him
11. and the doctor..said to my mum
12. he was **ever so** snotty with her
13. he said that he was lucky he **never** lost his eye..you know
14. my mum was **all** crying
15. she was so upset

If a speaker is to take the floor and keep it for long enough to tell a narrative, it is necessary to attract the attention and the interest of the addressees in the opening sections of the narrative. This is not necessarily an easy task, since the main interest of the story usually occurs later in the narrative. Often the opening clauses form an orientation section to the narrative (see Labov,1972), which merely sets out the main participants and their whereabouts, and which does not necessarily have a great deal of intrinsic interest for the addressees. Using this in the orientation section, as Lynne does, expresses her subjective involvement in what is being said, and, we can assume, creates an anticipatory interest on the part of the addressees in the story that is to be told. Furthermore, the combination of addressee-oriented items that occurs in the orientation section is likely to secure the attention of the addressees and to make the task of keeping the floor that much easier. Using 'metaphorical' this in the opening sections of narratives can be seen, therefore, as just one of a cluster of addressee-oriented items that enables the narrative to get underway.

Lynne's task in taking the floor is made easier by her friend Mandy's invitation to tell the story; nevertheless, in the orientation section of her narrative (clauses 1 - 5), she uses six addressee-oriented features, including three occurrences of the intensifier this (for discussion of oh in discourse, see Schiffrin, 1986).

In extract A (repeated below, from section 3), Ronny has a more difficult task. He tells his story immediately after another speaker has finished telling a story on the same general theme of naked ladies. There are several speakers with similar tales to tell, all eager to take the floor, so Ronny needs to use a number of strategies in order to gain his turn.

Extract A (Ronny):

1 **Do you know what happened to me** ?
2 I was in **this** lady's house.. up there..**right**,
3 and her little girl.. **right**
4 she said take this up to my mum
5 so I was walking upstairs
6 she was in the bathroom
7 and I went in the door
8 and there she was
9 standing completely naked
10 **just** standing there

Ronny's first strategy in engaging his addressee's interest is to use a question - clearly an addressee-oriented form. He also checks that the adresseees have followed the details of his orientation clauses, using the word right, with fall-rise intonation - another addressee-oriented item. He uses this to foreground the first available noun, in clause 2. The referent that is marked by this plays a central role in the story; this therefore plays a triple role here: it foregrounds a referent about which more information is forthcoming, it marks the emotional involvement of the speaker in the story that is to be told, thereby indicating to the addressee that the story is one that will be worth listening to; and it orients the discourse towards the addressee, metaphorically implying a shared experience, and therefore involving the addressee in the creation of the universe of discourse.

Note that in both Ronny's and Lynne's narratives, there are no addressee-oriented items in the clauses which report the main action. It seems that by the time speakers get to this part of the story, they can assume that they have secured the interest and the attention of their addressees, and they do not need to encumber their account of the action with items that no longer have a communicative function. Addressee-oriented items reappear, however, in the evaluation sections of the narratives. In Lynne's narrative, this is clauses 9-15; in Ronny's narrative, this is clause 10 (see Lee, 1987), for an analysis of just). Ronny also uses an intensifier, completely, to mark the climax of his story, in clause 9. Again, there is a communicative reason for their occurrence. At the end of a narrative speakers need to demonstrate that the story was worth telling, to avoid, as Labov (1972) has pointed out, the withering response "so what?" By using an item which expresses the speaker's subjective involvement in the story in the evaluative sections of the narrative, speakers express their emotional stake in the story, and justify its telling. Since, as I have claimed here, these items are also addressee-oriented features, the addressee is invited to help create the universe of discourse, and is more likely, therefore, to be sympathetic to the point of its having been told. Furthermore, the speaker will have satisfied the politeness requirements of the situation, by attending to the positive face of the addressees, in recognition of having monopolised the floor.

It is not only in narratives that addressee-oriented features serve an important function. Extract C is an argument that took place between Benny and Nobby. Benny is complaining about the area where the two boys live, saying that there is nothing to do there. Nobby is saying that nevertheless it would be hard to move and make new friends. Although they are arguing, each speaker uses linguistic features which take account of the other person. For example, Nobby marks his contribution as a preliminary to an argument with the formula poke your nose in clause 1; Benny takes up the argument, but softens the force of his statement with a tag question, in clause 2. Nobby's final comment makes his point strongly, with repetition (it wouldn't be the same, in clauses 6 and 8) and with quantifiers that express his subjective involvement (so much in clause 7 and the quantifier all in clause 9); and he orients his utterance towards his adressee with a cluster of linguistic features, including the quantifier all and the tag question ain't you.

Extract D: Nobby and Benny.

Nobby: 1. I've lived in Cumberland Road for ten years ..so...eleven years..**so poke your nose**
Benny: 2. **Yeah**..it's rubbish though.. round here, **isn't it**?
Benny: 3. **You ain't** got **nothing** to do..some nights
Jenny: Why.. what's wrong with it ? Looks allright to me
Nobby: 4. **Yeah**..but when **you** leaves now..
5. if **you** leave now..
6. it wouldn't be the same..
7. 'cos **you**'ve got used to the area **so much**..
8. it wouldn't be the same...
9. 'cos **you** gotta make **all** new friends..**ain't you**?

In Brown and Levinson's terms, Benny and Nobby are attending to each other's positive face in a number of different ways, despite the fact that they are arguing. The possible overstatement of the quantifier all in clause 9 implies that what Nobby is saying might not be literally true, so the threat to Benny's face is minimised; and by using tag questions in clauses 2 and 9, each speaker appeals to shared assumptions, attending to his addressee's positive face whilst at the same time strengthening the likelyhood of his argument being accepted.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has focused on the expression of non-propositional meaning in everyday spoken discourse. It is worth stressing that the meaning that is assigned to this and to the quantifiers all and never by sentence-based grammars takes no account of the meaning that these items express in everyday language and, as we have seen, even appears to directly conflict with their everyday meaning. Nevertheless, the analytical insights of sentence-based grammars do not necessarily have to be abandoned. Instead, it is necessary to take account of the way in which speakers express their emotional involvement in what they are saying; to take account, that is, of the subjectivity of utterance. It is equally necessary to take account of the fact that in face-to-face communication speakers are continually orienting their discourse towards their addressees, in order to serve specific communicative functions. These two fundamental aspects of spoken discourse are served by using *this*, *all* and *never* as metaphors; and this in turn necessarily involves the addressee in actively participating in the interpretation of the metaphor. The ability to use and interpret metaphors, of course, is a general cognitive ability, not just a language-specific ability, for it represents our ability to reason analogically (see Levinson, 1983:159). Equally, the systematic use of addressee-oriented items in spoken language reflects general social principles of cooperative activity between individuals, not just a language-specific ability (again, see Levinson, op.cit: 97). By focusing our analyses on the subjectivity of utterance and on the interactive features of spoken language, it may be possible to situate language behaviour within the wider perspective of general cognitive behaviour and general social behaviour. We may, in this way, achieve a more integrated and more worthwhile description and explanation of language structure and language use.

## References

Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1986) *Politeness* Cambridge: CUP

Cheshire, J. (1982) *Variation in an English dialect: a sociolinguistic study* Cambridge:CUP

Clark, E. (1974) 'Normal states and evaluative viewpoints' *Language* 50: 316-332

Coates, J. (1987) 'Epistemic modality and spoken discourse' *Transactions of the Philological Society*: 110-131

Coates, J. (1988) 'Modal meaning: the semantic - pragmatic interface'. Paper presented at the Linguistics Association of Great Britain Autumn meeting, University of Exeter. To appear in Brown, G. (ed) *Practical Semantics*

Crystal, D. (1964) 'Specification and English tenses' *Journal of Linguistics*: 1-34

*Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (1987) London: Collins

Holmes, J. (1988) 'Hedging, fencing and other conversational gambits: an analysis of gender differences in New Zealand speech' in A. Pauwels (ed) *Women and Language in New Zealand Society* Sydney: Australian Professional Publications

Ioup, G. (1975) 'Some universals for quantifier scope' in Kimball, J.P. (ed) *Syntax and Semantics Vol. 4* New York: Academic Press

Jespersen, O (1917) *Negation in English and other languages* Copenhagen: Andr. Fred Høst and Son.

Klima, E. (1964) 'Negation in English' in Fodor, J.A. and Katz, J.J. (eds) *The structure of language: readings in the philosophy of language* New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs: 246-323

Labov, W. (1972) 'The transformation of experience in narrative syntax'. In *Language in the Inner City* Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press: 354-397

Labov, W. (1973) 'Where do grammars stop?' in Shuy, R. (ed) *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press

Labov. W. (1984) 'Intensity' in Schiffrin, D. (ed) *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press

Lakoff, R. (1974) 'Remarks on *this* and *that*' *Proceedings of the Tenth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society*: 345-356

Lee, D, (1987) 'The semantics of *just*' *Journal of Pragmatics*: 377-398

Levinson, S. (1983) *Pragmatics* Cambridge CUP

Lyons, J. (1977) *Semantics* Cambridge CUP

Lyons, J. (1981) *Language, meaning and context* London Fontana

McCawley, J. (1977) 'Lexicographic notes on English quantifiers'. *Proceedings of the Tenth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society* 13: 372-383

Nordberg, B. (1987) 'The use of onomatopoeia in the conversational style of adolescents' In Lilius, P. and Saari, M. (eds) *The Nordic languages and Modern Linguistics* 6 Helsinki: Helsinki University Press

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. (1985) *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* London: Longman

Schiffrin, D. (1986) *Discourse markers* Cambridge CUP

Stein, D. (in press) *Natural and social factors in syntactic change* Berlin: De Gruyter

Stubbs, M. (1986) ' "A matter of prolonged fieldwork": Notes towards a model grammar of English' *Applied Linguistics* 17: 1-25

Traugott, E.C. (1972) *A History of English Syntax* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Vendler, Z. (1967) 'Each and every, any and all' In Vendler, Z. (ed) *Linguistics in Philosophy* Ithica: Cornell University Press

Wald, B. (1983) 'Referents and topic within and across discourse units: Observations from current vernacular English'. In Klein-Andreu, F. (ed) *Discourse perspectives on syntax* New York: Academic Press:93-118

# WOMEN'S SPEECH, WOMEN'S STRENGTH?

Jennifer Coates
(Roehampton Institute)

## 1. Language and the Androcentric Rule

As far back as we have records, people have commented on sex differences in language. The problem with any kind of variation is that difference is very often construed as inequality: where things are not identical, they are seen in terms of a better-worse relationship. In the case of variation resulting from sex differences, the value-judgement imposed by our culture is that of male/superior, female/inferior. As far as language is concerned, men's language is viewed as the norm, with women's language regarded as a deviation from that norm.

The language of women has been commented on in terms that make clear that it is seen as inferior, as an object of scorn. Proverbs, for example, traditional repositories of folk-wisdom, refer to women's supposed verbosity in disparaging terms: 'Many women, many words; many geese, many turds' (Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs). The writings of so-called 'men of letters' display a similar attitude to women's use of language. Lord Chesterfield, writing in 1741, claimed: 'Most women and all the ordinary people in general speak in open defiance of all grammar', while Wilson (1724) writes: 'Many a pretty Lady by the Silliness of her Words, hath lost the Admiration which her Face had gained'.

Linguistic commentary inevitably reflects cultural prejudices. This has led to some bizarre discrepancies. For example, 18th century commentators, who were concerned to 'fix' the language and who viewed change with alarm, blamed women for introducing unnecessary new words into English vocabulary. At the beginning of this century, by contrast, Jespersen, a Danish philologist, praised men as being the 'chief renovators' of language through their coinage of new words; he described women's vocabulary as 'much less extensive than that of a man' (Jespersen 1922:248). I have called this phenomenon **The Androcentric Rule** (see Coates 1986:15). A revised version of the rule reads: 'At any given time , the linguistic behaviour typical of male speakers will be viewed in positive terms, and will determine what is described as 'normal'; conversely, the linguistic behaviour of female speakers will be viewed negatively, and will be seen as a deviation from the (male) norm'. In this paper, I want to pursue the theme of androcentricity by showing that sociolinguistic description is not value-free, and that, in particular, work on sex differences in language is carried out in an androcentric framework.

In Britain and America today, folklinguistic myths about sex differences are alive and well. In an attitude test which used cartoon captions as a stimulus, Kramer (1974) found that students of both sexes characterised women's speech as "stupid, vague, emotional, confused, and wordy". Sociolinguists are not immune to

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 65-76
© the author

such attitudes; like everyone else, we are products, and perpetuators, of the culture we live in. Early work on language and sex differences had the undoubted merit of putting the issue of 'women's language' on the sociolinguistic agenda. However, it has also perpetuated folklinguistic myths about the inferiority of women's language.

Perhaps the most famous of these early publications is Lakoff's Language and Woman's Place (1975). Lakoff's description of language used by and about women is anecdotal rather than based on empirical evidence; not surprisingly, many of her claims have proved controversial. Her general claim is that there is a distinctive female speech style; more importantly, from the point of view of this paper, she describes this speech style in negative terms. The following passage typifies her position:

> "If the little girl learns her lesson well, she is not rewarded with unquestioned acceptance on the part of society; rather, the acquisition of this special style of speech will later be an excuse others use to keep her in a demeaning position, to refuse to take her seriously as a human being. Because of the way she speaks, the little girl - now grown to womanhood - will be accused of being unable to speak precisely or to express herself forcefully." (Lakoff 1975:5)

She claims that the overall effect of using this style is to submerge a woman's identity 'by denying her the means of expressing herself strongly .... and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject matter and uncertainty about it' (ibid:7).

## 2. Problems of interpretation

There is no dispute over the findings of empirical research which have emerged since the publication of Lakoff's paper. Sex differences have been found in many aspects of speech style, for example: women ask more questions (Brouwer, Gerritsen & DeHaan 1979); women use more minimal responses (Fishman 1980, 1983); women hedge their utterances more (Holmes 1984); men use more interruptions (Zimmerman & West 1975; West & Zimmerman 1983). The problem arises with interpretation of these findings.

The two main approaches to sex differences in speech style are known as the dominance approach and the difference (or subculture) approach. The dominance approach interprets linguistic differences in women's and men's speech styles as a reflection of men's dominance and women's subordination. The difference approach emphasises the idea that women and men belong to different subcultures; the differences in women's and men's speech styles are interpreted as reflecting these different subcultures.

Research adopting the dominance approach sees the hierarchical nature of gender relations as the primary factor causing sex differences. Lakoff's essay is a good example: she equates 'subordinate' with 'weak', and interprets women's language as intrinsically inferior to men's. Much of the work on linguistic sex differences cited above also takes this approach. Fishman

(1983) describes women's use of minimal responses in mixed interaction as 'conversational shitwork'; West and Zimmerman (1983) describe male patterns of interruption as 'a way of "doing" power in face-to-face interaction, and ... a way of "doing" gender as well'.

There is no doubt that the way women and men talk creates and maintains inequality between the sexes. However, this approach - in effect, a deficit model - is less helpful when we look at single-sex rather than mixed interaction. The difference approach has evolved as part of the explanatory framework for work on same-sex interaction. According to some researchers, women and men have different speech styles because they are socialised in different sociolinguistic subcultures. This approach reflects a growing political awareness among linguists that to label men's language as 'strong' and women's as 'weak' is to adopt an androcentric viewpoint. Moreover, the elision of female gender with subordinate status is simplistic. The difference, or subculture, approach attempts to investigate sex differences in speech style, and in particular, women's speech, from a positive standpoint.

### 3. Women talking to women

I want to look in detail at three linguistic forms which are widely recognised as being typical of women's speech style: minimal responses, hedges, and tag questions. These forms have all been described as 'weak'. I want to argue that such a description is inappropriate when we examine their usage in all-female discourse.

All-female discourse differs from mixed interaction in that it is symmetrical. Women who are friends talk to each other as equals (as do men who are friends). It has been observed that informal conversation among women friends can be characterised as cooperative (Kalcik 1975, Aries 1976, Goodwin 1980, Malz & Borker 1982). Cooperativeness is used by these writers not in the sense of Grice (1975), but to refer to a particular type of conversation where speakers work together to produce shared meanings. Set against this notion of cooperativeness is the notion of competitiveness; competitiveness is used to describe an adversarial style of conversation where speakers vie for turns and where participants are more likely to contradict each other than to build on each other's contributions. (It is claimed that this adversarial style is more typical of all-male conversation.)

At the heart of cooperativeness is a view of speakers collaborating in the production of text: the group takes precedence over the individual. When women talk to each other as friends their chief goal in conversation is not the exchange of information, but the maintenance of good social relationships. The conversational strategies used by women in this context are not a sign of weakness but are chosen precisely because they help to achieve the goal of consolidating friendship.

The material used in this paper is taken from transcriptions of the conversations of a group of women friends recorded surreptitiously over a period of 9 months during 1983-4.(1) These women had been friends for 8 years; they met regularly in the evening at each other's houses to have a drink and to talk.

### 3.1 *Minimal responses*

Research on the use of minimal responses is unanimous in showing that women use them more than men (Hirschmann 1974; Zimmerman & West 1975; Fishman 1980, 1983). Such research focuses on women's use of such forms in *mixed* interaction, where they function to support men as speakers (it is this servicing function which is described as 'conversational shitwork' by Fishman, 1983). It should not be automatically assumed that the use of these forms denotes powerlessness, however. The same form may function in different ways in different contexts. Certainly it is clear from my data that the use of minimal responses also characterises linguistic interaction between women who are friends and equals.

Minimal responses are used in two different ways in the women's conversations I recorded. In the discussion sections, which are essentially multi-party and interactive, they are used to support the speaker and to indicate the listener's active attention. This is illustrated in example (1) below, where the women are discussing whether it would be taboo to miss your mother's funeral.

```
(1) C: I think I would go now because probably because I would

    C: want to go=   cos it would be very easy to go=
    E:            =mm
    D:                                                 =yeah=
    A:                                                       =yeah
```

While C talks, first E, then D and A one after the other add their minimal responses. These responses are well placed: they are timed to come at the end of an information unit (e.g. a tone group or clause), yet so well anticipated is this point that the speaker's flow is not interrupted. (Both Zimmerman & West and Fishman have shown how the *delayed* minimal response is used by male speakers to indicate lack of interest and/or attention.) These minimal responses signal the listener's active participation in the conversation; they are an important component in the joint production of text.

In the narrative sections of the conversation, where one speaker holds the floor with the telling of an anecdote, minimal responses seem to have another meaning. They are used far less frequently, and when they occur they signal agreement among participants that a particular stage of conversation has been reached. For example, when a speaker introduces a new topic, as in example (2) below, there are no contributions by other speakers until the topic has been established.

(2) A: this bloke I met today who's doing (.) he he's doing some
postgraduate research at at Stirling (.) anyway I asked him
he he wanted to talk to me about a professional matter and
I (.) I said (.) I was asking him his sort of background
and he said that he'd done philosophy (.) so I was just
interested with little snippets of philosophy that came my
way you see and he said one of the things that he was
interested in was taboo (.) the nature of taboo (.) and he
said that (-) and he gave this example that um (.) if you
didn't go to your mother's funeral (-) because you'd got
something else to do (.) it would be very much frowned
upon um even though what you had to do could easily
D: oh god=
B: =mhm
be more important and after all she's dead= (.) and
C: =mhm
wouldn't know you weren't going kind of thing

It seems that D, B and C are indicating to A that they have taken the point of her anecdote, and that they accept it as a topic.

In example (3), which comes at the end of the same passage on taboo and mother's funerals, D's summary is followed by minimal responses from *all* the other participants.

(3) D: there's *two* things aren't there# there's the the the other
people like your mother or father who's left and or or
siblings and there's also how how you feel at that time
about (.) the easiness of going=
E: =mm=
C: =mm=
A: =mm=
B: =yeah

Clearly the women feel the need to indicate their active agreement with D's summing up. In both these examples, it is not just the presence of minimal responses at the end, but also their absence during the course of an anecdote or summary, which demonstrates the sensitivity of participants to the norms of interaction: speakers recognise different types of talk and use minimal responses appropriately.

### 3.2 *Hedges*

'Hedge' is the term used to refer to a large and disparate set of words and phrases whose function is to mitigate the force of what is said. Thus in the utterance *Perhaps it'll rain*, the word *perhaps* weakens the force of the proposition *it will rain*. Hedges are often viewed as stereotypically female as a result of being included in Lakoff's description of women's language. She asserts that forms like *well*, *sort of*, *you know*, *I think* are more common in women's speech. She defines them as: 'words that convey the sense that the speaker is uncertain about what he (or she) is saying, or cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement' (Lakoff 1975:53). She argues that, while the use of such forms is 'fully legitimate' where there is uncertainty, or where the speaker out of politeness wishes to mitigate 'the possible unfriendliness or unkindness of a statement' (ibid:54), their use in other contexts is a sign that the speaker lacks confidence. Such usage is, she claims, typical of women 'precisely because they are socialised to believe that asserting themselves strongly isn't nice or ladylike, or even feminine'.

My research indicates that women do exploit these forms more than men, but whether this indicates that they are afraid to assert themselves is another question. In mixed sex interaction, where power is unevenly distributed between the sexes, then women's use of such forms could be argued to indicate submissiveness or lack of assertiveness. But in all-female interaction, this seem a less plausible explanation. Where the women involved are friends and equals, we need to ask what functions the use of such forms is serving.

As part of my investigation into single-sex interaction, I carried out a detailed comparison of two 40-minute stretches of conversation, one all-male [2], the other all-female. Both texts were recorded in the evening at the homes of linguists who had asked their unsuspecting friends round for a drink. In both cases, the participants were white, well-educated, middle class, in their late 30s or early 40s. The crude totals for the use of the six most frequently occurring hedges are given in Table 1 below.

| | women | men |
|---|---|---|
| you know | 42 | 84 |
| I mean | 77 | 20 |
| well | 65 | 45 |
| just | 57 | 48 |
| I think | 36 | 12 |
| sort of | 35 | 10 |

TABLE 1: SEX DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF HEDGES

These figures must obviously be treated with caution: the sample is very small. However, there are some interesting tendencies. First, the pattern for you know, one of the hedges specifically mentioned by Lakoff, is quite different from that found for other hedges; it is used more by men than by women. Does this mean that these particular men are unusually unassertive? Or does it mean that you know needs to be treated separately? There is not space to deal with this issue here, but it should be noted that Holmes (1986) also finds that male speakers use you know twice as often as female speakers in same-sex conversations.

For the other five hedges, women's usage is greater than men's, particularly in the case of I mean and I think. What functions are such forms fulfilling? The examples below illustrate the way hedges are used in the women's conversations I have recorded.

(4) [talking about an old friend she's recently bumped into]
she looks very *sort of* um - *kind of* matronly *really*

(5) [taboo and going to funerals]
*I mean* *I think* it *really* depends on the attitude of the
survivors who are there

(6) [discussion of Yorkshire Ripper case]
oh god yes *well* *I mean* we were living in Yorkshire at the time
and I - *I mean* I . *I mean* I did# I *sort of* thought *well* .
*could* it be John#

It is my contention (see Coates 1987:129) that women exploit the multifunctional nature of hedges. They use them to mitigate the force of an utterance in order to respect addressees' face needs. Thus, the underlined forms in example (4) hedge the assertion *she looks matronly* not because the speaker doubts its truth but because she does not want to offend her addressees by assuming their agreement (describing a friend in unflattering terms is controversial). Such forms also protect the speaker's face: the speaker in (4) can retreat from the proposition expressed there if it turns out to be unacceptable. Similar considerations apply to (5) and (6). In (5), the speaker is putting forward the point of view that the crucial factor determining whether you attend your mother's funeral or not is the wishes of your father or other surviving relatives; she hedges her utterance to avoid coming into disagreement with other speakers. This tactic allows new views to be aired without forestalling further discussion. The speaker also protects her own face and that of her addressees in case her point of view turns out to be controversial.

In both examples (5) and (6) the sensitivity of the topic requires speakers to air their views cautiously. Where self-disclosure is involved, the speaker is particularly vulnerable and so will use hedges as a face-protecting device. In (6), the speaker reveals to her friends that police appeals for women in Yorkshire to consider the men they knew had led her to consider her own husband. This is a very sensitive area: the speaker lays herself open to the charge of disloyalty; worse, she admits to having wondered if her husband could be a murderer. On the other hand, she needs to reveal this fact to her friends in order to reassure herself that she has not behaved abnormally. Because of its face-threatening nature, self-disclosure is typically accompanied by hedging.

Women's greater use of hedges can be explained in part by topic choice. The women's conversations I have analysed involve predominantly topics relating to people and to feelings, as the examples in this paper illustrate. Men talking to other men seem to prefer to talk about *things*. In the all-male conversation I analysed, the men discuss home beer making, the relative merits of Guinness and Newcastle Brown, the complexity of modern hi-fi systems, how to switch reels when showing a film. Presumably such topics do not trigger the use of hedges because they are not so face-threatening.

Another crucial feature of all-female discourse is self-disclosure. It is the medium through which experiences, and the emotions associated with those experiences, are shared. This sharing of feelings has the merit of promoting in-group solidarity; but it is fraught with risk in that it makes the speaker vulnerable, as well as threatening addressees' face. Clearly, hedges are a valuable resource for any group which wishes to facilitate self-disclosure.

### 3.3 *Tag questions*

The tag question is the linguistic form which has come to hold the position of archetypal women's feature as a result of Lakoff's focus on it. Lakoff's example *It's so hot, isn't it?* is meant to demonstrate the innate weakness of such usage - she argues that it would be more forceful to say simply *It's so hot*. On the grounds that 'questioning one's own opinions is futile', she claims that the only 'legitimate' tag is one which seeks information.

There are several problems with Lakoff's analysis of tag questions. Firstly, it is not clear from empirical studies that women use these forms more than men (see Dubois & Crouch 1975). Moreover, nothing very sensible can be said about tag question usage unless it is conceded that this one form has several different functions; research indicates that men use more *modal* tags (those which seek information), while women use more *affective* tags (those which indicate concern for the addressee; see Holmes 1984; Cameron et al 1989). Another problem is that work in discourse analysis suggests that the use of addressee-oriented tags (those described as illegitimate by Lakoff) is strongly associated with powerful rather than powerless speakers (see Harris 1984; Cameron, McAlinden & O'Leary 1989).

My analysis of the use of tag questions in all-female conversation shows that, as in mixed interaction, women use more affective (addressee-oriented) tags. In one of the conversations I recorded (about 40 minutes of transcribed material) there are 23 tag questions, yet of these only 4 are used to elicit information; the rest are addressee-oriented. Addressee-oriented tags can be used either to soften the force of negatively affective utterances or to facilitate interaction (see Holmes 1984). It is facilitative tags which Lakoff labelled 'illegitimate' and which she surmised were typical of women's speech. Facilitative tags have been given this name precisely because they are used to facilitate the participation of others. The following two examples illustrate this (tags underlined).

(7) E: but I mean so much research is male-dominated# I mean it's
just . it's staggering *isn't it*=
A: =mhm

(8) D: it was dreadful *wasn't it*=
E: =appalling Caroline absolutely appalling

In asymmetrical discourse, the frequent occurrence of such tags seems to be related to their conducive nature: that is, powerful speakers, such as magistrates (Harris 1984) or chat show hosts (Cameron et al 1989), use them to get other participants to speak. In my data, that is, in *symmetrical* discourse, facilitative tags occur frequently (18 out of 23 tags), but they are not used conducively. Where the use of such tags results in another participant speaking, the response is brief (as in examples 7 and 8). More remarkably, the majority of facilitative tags occurring in my data produce no response at all, or at most a minimal response. Instead they occur in mid-utterance, and the speaker seems to expect no verbal response. Examples (9) and (10) illustrate this type:

(9) I think the most difficult thing is is that when you love someone you you half the time you forget their faults (yes) *don't you* and still maybe love them but I mean ....

(10) [Yorkshire Ripper case]
A: and they had they had a very accurate picture of him

A: *didn't they* they roughly knew his age=
D: = at one point they

A: =yeah=
D: knew about his gap teeth too *didn't they*= =then they

D: got rid of that

Of the 18 facilitative tags, 9 occur in mid-utterance, like these; another three come at the end of a speaker's turn but elicit no overt response. Most of the remaining examples appear as comments by active listeners, as in (11) below.

(11) D: cos I'm fed up of travelling to conferences but I'm
B: oh it's so

D: giving a paper
B: typical *isn't it*

All these examples involve falling intonation, and all expect the answer *yes*.

The women conversationalists seem to use these tags to check the taken-for-grantedness of what is being said. Paralinguistic cues (nodding, smiling, etc.), and sometimes minimal responses, signal to the speaker that what she is saying has the support of the group. This type of facilitative tag has not been remarked on before. It is facilitative in that it is part of the process by which women speakers arrive at a consensus. To call such tags 'illegitimate' is to misunderstand their function. Moreover, I would argue that these tags are not a sign of weakness; they are one of the means used by women to produce discourse cooperatively.

## 4. Women's discourse: weak or strong?

In this paper, I have examined minimal responses, hedges and tag questions. In friendly all-female conversation, these linguistic forms function as cooperative devices. Participants use minimal responses to signal their active listenership and support for the current speaker; they use them too to mark their recognition of the different stages of conversational development. Hedges are used to respect the face needs of all participants, to negotiate sensitive topics, and to encourage the participation of others; one effect of hedging is that the speaker does not take a hard line - where a group rather than an individual overview is the aim of discussion, then linguistic forms which mitigate the force of individual contributions are a valuable resource. Tag questions also encourage the participation of others; among women friends, however, they are more often used to check the taken-for-granted nature of what is being asserted, to monitor that the speaker has the support of the group.

Misunderstanding of women's linguistic style arises from a failure to understand women's subculture. In all-female conversation, features typical of women's speech can be shown to be functional in terms of the goals of all-female interaction.To dismiss this style as weak and tentative is to collude in the dominant view of what is normal. It is illogical to attribute weakness to linguistic forms just because they are typical of the speech style of a group of speakers who are not the dominant group in a given society. Black oral narrative in the U.S., for example, is analysed in its own terms (e.g. Labov 1972) even though black speakers form a relatively powerless group in that society.

So while it would be naive to claim that women's subculture exists outside existing power structures, it would be equally unrealistic to label the linguistic style used by women as simply 'oppressed'or 'powerless'. Yet Coupland & Coupland (1988:144) have argued that only a dominance approach is tenable, on the grounds that 'female repertoires .... are 'different' essentially in their powerlessness'. They make the strong claim that the representation of female repertoires as different (and strong) rather than powerless is to collude in the continuing repression of women. I challenge this view: it is part of a historical tradition which sees women's culture as an aberration from a male norm (see the Androcentric Rule).

Furthermore, 'powerlessness' is quite inaccurate as a description of the linguistic style used by women talking to other women in a friendly context. When used reciprocally, this style can be used as a powerful sign of mutual support and solidarity. In many respects, such language approaches the ideal of cooperative discourse - what those who work in the counselling professions call 'co-counselling'. Ironically, it has long been recognised in the psychological field that communicative sensitivity is one of women's strengths, and that inexpressivity is a male problem (see, for example, Noller & Fitzpatrick 1988).

It is very important that we do not conflate the 'women's language' said to be typical of mixed interaction with the 'women's language' which characterises all-female discourse. The two need to be analysed separately. Inter-group interaction will inevitably differ from intra-group interaction. Moreover, growing awareness of the norms - and the strengths - of all-female discourse may help us to reassess our interpretation of the linguistic forms used by women in mixed interaction. In different contexts, different styles are appropriate. It is my contention that, while 'male' conversational style may be well adapted to public domains where information exchange is a priority, women's conversational style is better suited to the needs of informal interaction between equals where the maintenance of good social relationships is the priority. The strengths of women's conversational strategies in all-female interaction need to be asserted: to do this we need a difference and not a deficit model.

## FOOTNOTES

1. For a more detailed description of the data and my methods in obtaining it, see Coates (forthcoming). I would like to place on record once again my gratitude to my friends for their cooperation in this venture.
2. I am grateful to Professor S. Greenbaum for allowing me to use material from the Survey of English Usage, University College London.

## REFERENCES

Aries E. (1976) 'Interaction patterns and themes of male, female and mixed groups', Small Group Behaviour 7 (1), 7-18.

Brouwer D., Gerritsen M. & DeHaan D. (1979) 'Speech differences between women and men: on the wrong track?', Language in Society 8, 33-50.

Cameron D., MacAlinden F. & O'Leary K. (1989) 'Lakoff in context: the social and linguistic functions of tag questions' in Coates J. & Cameron D. (eds).

Coates J. (1986) Women, Men and Language, London: Longman.

Coates J. (1987) 'Epistemic modality and spoken discourse'. Transactions of the Philological Society,110-131.

Coates J. (1989) 'Gossip revisited: language in all-female groups' in Coates J. & Cameron D. (eds).

Coates J. & Cameron D. (eds.) (1989) Women in their Speech Communities, London: Longman.

Coupland J. & Coupland N. (1988) Review of Coates J. Women, Men and Language in Textual Practice 2 (1), 137-144.

Dubois B.L. & Crouch I. (1975) 'The question of tag questions in women's speech: they don't really use more of them, do they?', *Language in Society* 4, 289-94.

Fishman P. (1980) 'Conversational insecurity' in Giles, Robinson & Smith (eds.) *Language: Social Psychological Perspectives*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 127-132.

Fishman P. (1983) 'Interaction: the work women do', pp. 89-101 in Thorne, Kramarae & Henley (eds) *Language, Gender and Society*, Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

Grice H.P. (1975) 'Logic and conversation' pp. 41-58 in Cole & Morgan (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, New York: Academic Press.

Goodwin M. (1980) 'Directive-response speech sequences in girls' and boys' task activities' in McConnell-Ginet S. et al (eds.) *Women and Language in Literature and Society*, New York: Praeger.

Harris S. (1984) 'Questions as a mode of control in magistrates' courts', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 49.

Hirschmann L. (1974) 'Analysis of supportive and assertive behaviour in conversations', paper presented at Linguistic Society of America meeting, July 1974.

Holmes J. (1984) 'Hedging your bets and sitting on the fence: some evidence for hedges as support structures', *Te Reo* 27, 47-62.

Holmes J. (1986) 'Functions of *you know* in women's and men's speech'. *Language in Society* 15 (1), 1-22.

Jespersen O. (1922) *Language, Its Nature, Development, and Origin*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Kalcik S. (1975) "...like Ann's gynecologist or the time I was almost raped" - personal narratives in women's rap groups', *Journal of American Folklore* 88, 3-11.

Kramer, C. (1974) 'Stereotypes of women's speech: The word from cartoons', *Journal of Popular Culture* 8, 624-30.

Labov W. (1972) *Language in the Inner City*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lakoff R. (1975) *Language and Woman's Place*, New York: Harper & Row.

Maltz D.N. & Borker R.A. (1982) 'A cultural approach to male-female miscommunication' pp. 195-216 in Gumperz J. (ed.) *Language and Social Identity*, C.U.P.

Noller P. & Fitzpatrick M.A. (eds.) (1988) *Perspectives on Marital Interaction*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Strodtbeck F. & Mann R. (1956) 'Sex role differentiation in jury deliberations', *Sociometry* 19, 3-11.

West C. & Zimmerman D. (1983) 'Small insults: A study of interruptions in cross-sex conversations between unacquainted persons' , pp. 103-118 in Thorne, Kramarae & Henley (eds.) *Language Gender and Society*, Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

Zimmerman D. & West C. (1975) 'Sex roles, interruptions and silences in conversation', pp. 105-29 in Thorne & Henley (eds.) *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*, Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.

# AGE IDENTITY AND ELDERLY DISCLOSURE OF CHRONOLOGICAL AGE*

**Nikolas Coupland and Justine Coupland**

(Centre for Applied English Language Studies,
University of Wales College of Cardiff)

Variably, at different points in the life-span(1), taboos and normative prescriptions are associated with both seeking and providing information about age. Children and adolescents are often asked to tell their age by distant relatives or new acquaintances, or have this information revealed for them by parents or guardians. Inquiring about age in these contexts, to the extent that it is more than ritualised, seems to be part of a signalling of engagement and perhaps nurturance by well-meaning adults interested in following the growth and development of the young. In the middle years of life, age-in-years, and perhaps all discussion of own age, drops out of unmarked usage, appearing to feature predominantly in mock-denigrating remarks about the passing of time, references to the unwanted arrival of birthdays, commercially promoted through the greetings-card industry(2).

The admixture of fear, reticence and regret with which, facetiously or not, middle-aged adults appear to represent their experiences of ageing, and the consequent teasing and chiding of those whose ageing comes up for review, undoubtedly form part of the interactional means by which negative images of ageing and the elderly are reproduced. Images crassly invoked here amount to a checklist of negative elderly stereotypes: frailty, sexual inactivity, incompetence, grouchiness, unsociability, and so on. Within this 'calendar-marking' tradition and associated discourses, personal life-spans are viewed as incremented scales with natural boundaries which are bench-marks to decrement: physical, social and socio-psychological. Decade-boundaries seem to have a particular salience in this respect, as do transitions from one generational category to another (parent to grandparent, for example). Multi-disciplinary investigations of these phenomena have, as far as we know, yet to be done.

In old age, the life-span territory we explore in this paper, age-in-years re-surfaces from its underground life. The data we draw on, from two audio-recorded contexts, confirm the prevalence of disclosing chronological age (DCA) among at least some elderly groups. Given the pejorative associations of advancing age among younger groups (as we have speculatively sketched it), we are led to ask why elderly DCA might be not only 'tolerated' but positively construed on occasions. The particular aim of the paper is therefore to consider the social functioning of DCA in context, and to achieve this through examining the discursive sequences and routines through which, in our data, age-disclosure is managed. Our interpretations are couched in terms of age-identity (cf. J. Coupland, N. Coupland, Giles and Henwood, submitted), and more particularly the various elderly-identifications that DCA can encode.

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 77-88
© the authors

## The data context

The first and primary data-set for this report is a corpus of 40 videotaped interactions where pairs of volunteer subjects, women aged 70-87 and 30-40 years (referred to here, for convenience, as 'elderly' and 'young'), were asked to 'get to know one another'. Participants, who had never met previously, were given no further instructions and were left alone, knowing they were being video-recorded, for eight minutes. (Each pair was also recorded for two minutes after their get-acquainted session, unaware that cameras were still running, though these two sub-contexts are not distinguished in this report.) The elderly women, most with (grossly characterised) upper-working-class backgrounds, were members of two Day Centres in Cardiff, Wales; most lived alone and were widowed. The young women were mostly lower-middle-class and married, and were recruited through an advertisement in a local newspaper. 20 of the dyads were intergenerational (young-old); 10 were peer-young and 10 peer-elderly. According to the study-design, therefore, each subject participated in two interactions, one within- and one across-generation. All relevant sequences were transcribed (using notation developed from that of Jefferson, as summarised in Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). The longer, numbered, transcribed extracts reproduced below are all taken from this first source, and are used to illustrate the contextualisation of DCA. (Each of the 40 interactions is identified with a two-digit reference-number: I01 - I40; elderly participants are numbered E01 - E20, and young participants as Y01 - Y20.)

A supplementary corpus was available in the form of a series of interviews with 40 elderly people (34 women and 6 men). The population were volunteers from one of the two Day Centres attended by the 20 elderly females who took part in the primary interactive study. In these interviews, three researchers asked a series of questions on the subject of experiences of health care (the questions are detailed below). This second source is used here only to support the distributional evidence from the first study. (Brief transcribed fragments from this second study are attributed to speakers identified by [fictionalised] initials.)

## Age-disclosure: distributional overviews

Though the principal interest of this paper is the qualitative analysis of how DCA is contextualised in discourse, we begin with quantitative overviews simply to establish that elderly DCA is a robust generational phenomenon. Within the (primary) interactive data-set, intergenerational conversations are the preferred contexts for DCA (15 disclosures in 20 interactions), most by older speakers (12, or 60% of possible elderly DCAs to young interlocutors). Each of the 3 young DCAs in the intergenerational condition is made after (though not immediately after) an elderly DCA. In 2 cases (I14 and I19), the young person comes to disclose her age through herself having asked her elderly interlocutor how old her daughter/son is, and then proclaiming herself a similar age: that is, the young person aligns with the succeeding generation. In one other case (I25), E13 asks Y13 her age and comments *you're like one of my granddaughters*, again aligning generationally. DCA hardly occurs among peer-elders, and in the 2 interactions (4 disclosures) where it does, there is a possibly significant age-difference between interlocutors (86-70; 77-66). The older woman discloses her age first, and the younger woman reciprocates this disclosure within the same discourse sequence. Of the peer-young DCAs (5 disclosures in 3 interactions), 2 pairs (in I11 and I37) are again matched in immediate sequence.

Given the small numbers in the interactive data set, it is useful to compare patterns of DCA in the interview corpus. In 32 of the 40 interviews, elderly interviewees disclosed their chronological age. In 6 of the others too, own age is referred to without being specified as age-in-years. For example, (VH) *otherwise I can't grumble at all like (.) well not for my age*; (GM) *oh well I mean to say you can expect it at my time of life*. Hence own age is explicitly or implicitly invoked by interviewees in all but 2 cases (see J. Coupland *et al*., submitted, for discussion of a wider range of elderly identity-marking processes). DCAs were spontaneous in the sense that questions asked[3] did not directly implicate age. The first move made by interviewers was a supposedly phatic opening: 'How are *you*?', uniformly with primary stress on the final syllable. The second (and the first 'content' question) was 'How is your health generally?', with a supplementary question, if needed: 'Are you receiving treatment for any health problems at the moment?' The third was 'Do you see your GP [general practitioner] often? Are you seeing him/her at the moment?'. The attested DCAs were distributed across the data in responses to questions as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 'How are *you*?': | 8 |
| 'How is your health generally?': | 16 |
| 'Do you see your GP often?' : | 2 |
| 'Do you think doctors generally provide good health-care for elderly people?': | 4 |
| Later follow-up questions: | 2 |

DCA is hence not only frequent (80%) in the supplementary corpus, but it tends to occur early in the interviews, and particularly in response to a direct invitation to appraise own health. In fact, the above distribution might suggest that the explicit *or implicit* thematisation of health (if health is taken by the elderly respondents to be implicated in an otherwise phatic 'How are *you*?') establishes a relevance for DCA. This relationship is explored in detail in the following qualitative analyses. Overall, we take the supplementary corpus as confirming the emergent pattern from the interactive study -- that DCA is a regular feature of the talk of at least some groups of elderly people, particularly in cross-generational contexts.

## The discourse of Chronological Age Disclosure.

From a decontextualised perspective, the simple frequency of elderly DCA might be taken as evidence that age-in-years has shed its pejorative associations for older people. The importance of a discourse analytic perspective here, focussing on the staging of disclosive sequences, is that it immediately shows DCA to be involved in complex, diverse and even contradictory presentational activities, where old age is neither wholly negatively nor positively construed. The general position we adopt in this section, then, is that chronological age is most appropriately seen as an *identity-token*. We conceive of DCA as a 'counter' whose value is determined to a significant extent by its placement and timing in an interaction, and which is 'played' in the pursuance of particular strategic ends. In adopting this position, we are clearly rejecting the assumption that DCA is the revealing of one among many items of personal information, as the term 'self-disclosure' seems to imply (see also J. Coupland, N. Coupland, Giles and Wiemann, 1988).

In fact, many DCAs in the interactive data do share a normative view of old age as decremental. So, in Extract 1, E02 discloses her age (at line 11) in the context of identifying her own frailty:

**Extract 1**
(From I02)

```
line
 1   E02  but today they don't want to know you
 2   Y02  mm=
 3   E02  I have a (.) nephew living up at the top of the road
 4   Y02  yes
 5   E02  but I don't see=
 6   Y02  =you don't see him?
                          [
 7   E02                   ((don't want to know you)) (.) not
 8        unless I run up there
 9   Y02  yes=
10   E02  =and I'm I'm not very well these days too (.) I'm
11        seventy last Octob=
12   Y02  =were you?=
13   E02  =this October=
14   Y02  =ah
15   E02  so I I find I can't do it so good
            [   ]                  [
16   Y02    yes                     you don't want to overdo
17        things ((do you?))
```

The statement I'm seventy...this October so I find I can't do it so good presupposes there to be a natural relationship between ageing and immobility, and age-in-years is thus offered as a rationalising account of E02's frailty. Whereas in our speculations about middle-age, we suggested that advancing years could project incompetence or debilitation, we see that, in later life, acknowledged frailty can in fact be somewhat off-set through self-presenting as chronologically old.

This accounting pattern in the management of DCA is very common in both data-sets. In the supplementary corpus, worsening health (reported in response to the health-appraisal question) is often directly attributed to chronological age, for example:

(SM) as well as I can be...I'll tell you first I'm going on ninety;
(CH) oh not very good (.) well I'm almost eighty and I can't expect much;
(MM) not on top of the world but...when you come to eighty-three years of age you can't expect to be like a spring chicken can you?;
(GT) I haven't been too well...because...of course I'm getting on now I'll be eighty next year.

One interviewee in the corpus reponds to the interviewer's how is your health generally would you say? as follows: (GJ) (sighing) well my dear (.) well you haven't asked me how old I am, implying she cannot even attempt an own-health-appraisal independently of considerations of age. The accounting can be done defensively, rather than expressed as resignation. BD, for example, says that at eighty-four? I've got a right to be [a bit stiff] don't you think?. In a small number of instances (though still worryingly), the ill-health being accounted for by age is reportedly an attribution made by medical practitioners:

(FM) as soon as you've got something wrong with you they say 'how old are you? ...oh well you can't expect much more at your age' (.) they're not interested as far as I'm concerned (.) in my experience once you get to seventy...they put it down to your age whatever it is...I don't think it's right.

On the other hand, several elderly individuals invoke the age/ill-health norm of association specifically to differentiate themselves from it.

**Extract 2**
(from I03)
line
1 Y01 ...I'm just a housewife now...well not just
2 is it really? (.) because my children are at school
[ ]
3 E01 (laughing) yes
4 E01 mm (1.0) oh well that's nice isn't it?
5 Y01 yes=
6 E01 =mm (1.5) well I lead quite a busy life although
7 I'm eighty-six I'm not young (laughs)
[
8 Y01 gosh you don't look it!
9 E01 I was eighty-six last May
[
10 Y01 goodness you certainly don't look that...

In Extract 2, E01 aligns herself with the younger woman's active lifestyle (well I lead quite a busy life), despite her age (although I'm eighty-six I'm not young). The expression 'good for one's age' has conventionalised precisely this association in everyday usage. E01 refuses to align herself with the perceived norm for eighty-six. Likewise, WJ (in the interview data) comes to a positive self-appraisal in relation to her age: I'm eighty so I haven't done bad; LD similarly: mind I'm gone eighty I'm going eighty one!...and I think I'm pretty good.

Whereas DCA in the accounting pattern mitigates the negative associations of actual frailty, in this second disjunctive usage DCA allows the discloser to claim credit against normative expectations of frailty which are not in fact realised. Strategically, therefore, for the elderly individuals concerned, disclosing age carries very different identity-potential in the two formulations. But at the same time, accounting and disjunctive patterns find their meanings in a single set of underlying assumptions about the nature of ageing itself. In both cases, chronological age is established as one pole of a relational evaluation, the other pole being 'actual', experienced life-position or what we can call (following Rubin and Rubin, 1986) 'contextual age'. It is as if ageing is dually represented: first in chronological terms, as predictable, even ineluctable progression along an incremented scale; second in contextual terms, as a far less predictable ebbing and flowing, reflecting the arrival and passing of particular somatic, experiential and emotional circumstances (for example, illness, bereavement or institutionalisation). We might model chronological and contextual age as two indicators advancing (since decline is the unmarked trend in the contextual dimension too) in parallel along a single graduated life-span template. If so, then DCA can be seen to be involved, in the cases we have considered, in negotiating the precise relationship between the two indicators. We can speculate that, in a broadly ageist attitudinal climate (Levin and Levin, 1980), for most adult individuals on most occasions, there will be a preference to retard progress in both chronological and contextual dimensions. But that, given the inevitability of time-passing, there will be a preference for contextual age to 'lag behind' chronological age.

We need not doubt the negotiability of the relative positioning. Firstly, it is apparent that contextual age is an essentially subjective, global appraisal. Evaluating 'how one is' in ageing is open to moment-to-moment redefinition, depending not only on changing circumstances but on the shifting salience of particular contributing factors. There would appear to be a real sense in which we cannot know 'how we are', and another in which, if we did know, we would predictably be unable to represent this knowledge in any coherent, packaged formulation to others. Indeed, the responses to health-appraisal questions (quoted above) have an overtly negotiative quality to them, often qualified or hedged, and appealing to particular standards of judgement. As Jefferson (1985) has noted, too, they often function as 'glosses' to be 'unpackaged' in subsequent exchanges.

A crucial further consideration is that life-positional evaluations are not made unilaterally. In the evaluative process, the judgements most pertinent to subjects themselves may in fact be those of others, giving further justification for expecting age-identities to be discursively managed. In the extracts we have already considered, young recipients (of elderly DCA) can be seen providing diverse modes of support to elderly self-projections (cf. N. Coupland, Henwood, J. Coupland and Giles, 1988). In Extract 1, YO2 elects to endorse the elderly person's presented frailty: she says you don't want to overdo things ((do you?)). In Extract 2, YO1's effusive responses (gosh you don't look it!... goodness you certainly don't look that...) seem to be required if EO1's disjunctive inference (that she is contextually 'younger' than eighty-six) is to be credited. In Extract 3, Y13 does even more explicit consolidatory work in response to E13's DCA:

**Extract 3**
(from I25)

```
line
 1    Y13  have you got any family?
 2    E13  I have a daughter
 3    Y13  does she does she live in Cardiff?
                [         ]              [
 4    E13         she                      she's living in Pencoed
 5          near Bridgend ...
 6    E13   she comes up every Tuesday and er (.) we go shopping
 7          and have a run around you know
 8    Y13   you haven't got any grandchildren
                  [     ]
 9    E13          she
10          yes I have er (laughs) I have (coughs) two grandchildren
               [         ]
11    Y13      (laughs)
12    E13   and I have four great grandchildren (laughs)
                                      [       ]       [
13    Y13                              (gasps)          (laughs)
14    Y13   oh! nice yes (.) you don't look that old (laughs)
          [              ]                             [
15    E13   they're lovely                               (laughs)
16    E13   oh yes
17    Y13   (quietly) oh dear
18    E13   well I'm seventy-seven
19    Y13   (high pitch) really?
20    E13   yes (laughs)
                [
21    Y13        I thought you were sort of sixty I just assumed
                                                  [
22    E13                                          did you oh
23          that's nice
24    Y13   yeah yeah it's funny most people I know who are
25          seventy-seven aren't (gasps) dashing in and out of Day
26          Centres (.) oh that's nice (.) oh
```

At lines 10-12, where E13 is telling she has grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the stylistic key signalled by accompanying laughter seems interactionally significant. E13 laughs (first) presumably because she thinks Y13 will think that having great-grandchildren is surprising. Y13 duly gasps, and verbalises the disjunction between her interlocutor's appearance and her generational role: she (line 14) compliments E13 that she doesn't look that old. The DCA (at line 18) will predictably elicit another comment on the disjunction, this time between appearance and chronological age. Seventy-seven supposedly is that old, though E13 apparently is 'better than' her age, in the judgement both of Y13 (I thought you were sort of sixty) and presumably of E13 herself. Surprise-at-age is encoded verbally in lines 14 (oh!) and 19 (really?), and prosodically throughout the responses.

Such compliments and gifts of praise find their force as attempts to deny an interlocutor's decrement, sometimes in highly particular respects.

**Extract 4**
(from I33)
(Y18 has been telling how her mother's house has been burgled)
line

```
 1    Y18   ...and that's made her nervous you know I think once
 2          something like that
                                        [
 3    E18                                yes (.) of course (.) how
```

4 old is she?
5 Y18 she's seventy-two
6 E18 I'm seventy-eight
7 Y18 (astonished) are you?
8 E18 yes
9 Y18 (gasps) gosh you're marvellous aren't you?
10 E18 (laughing slightly) I don't know
11 Y18 oh gosh you are I'd never have thought (.) you've got
12 lovely skin (puts hands up to cheeks, forward lunge, laughs) you have haven't you?
13 E18 (puts hands up to cheeks, forward lunge, laughs) oh I
14 don't know (laughs)
15 Y18 (emphatically) oh you have!=
16 E18 =yeah
17 Y18 my mother (.) looks the same sort as you
[
18 E18 does she?
[
19 Y18 she she looks
[
20 E18 yes yes
21 Y18 younger than her age and she's got a great outlook on life...

In Extract 4, Y18 (at lines 11/12) compliments E18 saying she has lovely skin, and goes on to give an explicit rationale. She classifies her elderly interlocutor alongside her own mother (and in a highly depersonalised way, saying she looks the same sort), who she says looks younger than her age. It is the older woman in this sequence who has initial responsibility for introducing the theme of chronological age, and she of course volunteers her own age, perhaps seeking some expression of surprise-at-age. Still, it appears that inviting interlocutors to participate in age-identity appraisals can carry heavy costs to elderly disclosers as well as benefits. Y18's extended accounting for her assessment surely takes her into intrusive and patronising talk, which paradoxically threatens the positive identity she presumably seeks to build (cf. N. Coupland, J. Coupland, Giles and Henwood, 1988)

Responses to DCA seem to find a particular salience in the lexical item marvellous (in Extract 4, line 9, and very frequently in the data). It is used as if to identify a global attribute of people, 'you are marvellous', though its referent is conventionally more specific: global health/wellbeing. Its force is credit-giving and of course complimenting but also conveying suprise. Also, its meaning is implicitly relational (far more so than in the sense that the whole class of attributives are). It evaluates wellbeing in relation to circumstances - either ill fortune, ill health or old age, and therefore is directly apposite in this context. On the other hand, in our view, marvellous smacks of residualism, implying that individuals have endured their unfortunate lot with noteworthy and unusual success. Arguably, therefore, it plays some small part in alienating and fossilizing the elderly, however well the compliment might be received in face-to-face encounters. The conventionality of the term's association with age/health evaluations allows it to act in its own right as a trigger for DCA:

**Extract 5**

(from I04, a peer-elderly interaction; E01 has been telling E02 how she found her husband dead in bed only three weeks after his retirement.)

```
line
 1  E02  what a shock for you!
                         [
 2  E01                   yes it was a shock yes
 3  E02  oh it's marvellous you're like you are isn't it
 4  E01  well (.) I'm eighty-six last May ((3 sylls.)) (laughs)
                                             [       ]
 5  E02                                       oh god
 6  E02  you can give me a few years
 7  E01  so I'm not a youngster really
                           [
 8  E02                     just gone seventy
 9  E01  mm I was eighty-six last May
                           [
10  E02           (quietly)  marvellous (tuts)
```

In Extract 5 (line 3), E02 is being sympathetic about the shock E01 has suffered and says it is marvellous she is as she is. The sense of marvellous is already relational here; E02 is giving a global positive assessment of E01's state of wellbeing in relation to the particular loss she has suffered - the death of her husband. E01's DCA at line 4, following directly form E02's marvellous, extends the basis of the relational assessment. She is marvellous more generally than E02 has recognised -- in relation to her chronological life-position as a whole. She adds another standard of comparison, and of course thereby accepts the compliment, endorsing and even developing its basis, implicitly indulging in self-congratulation.

## Overview

We are aware that many other key processes and issues in DCA management have yet to be considered. Future discussions of the contextualisation of DCA will need to explore at least (a) variability in the encoding of DCAs (for example stative versus progressive references to own age); (b) the pre-contexts to DCA, and thus the means by which elderly people variously engineer opportunities to disclose age or respond to contextual pressures to disclose; (c) processes differentiating DCA management by 'young' (where they do disclose age) and 'elderly' and their sub-groups; and (d) cross-situational variability. Despite the limited range of issues we have been able to explore here, we feel justified in highlighting a few key interpretive points.

First, there seems to be ample justification for treating elderly DCA as functional and strategic. That is, though the task-requirement in the interactive study was, to an extent, to disclose, we need to account for the uneven distribution of DCA across elderly and young groups; also for the sheer pervasiveness of elderly DCA in both environments. In the interview corpus, though we have recognised that health and wellbeing enter a predictable relationship with considerations of age, no specific references to age were made by researchers in the interviews. Hence, the relationship of health to chronological age is one established by elderly interviewees themselves in these data. In any event, our own previous research has already established that own ill-health is itself a highly productive topic area in unscripted intergenerational talk (cf. N. Coupland, J. Coupland, Giles, Henwood and Wiemann, 1988).

What particularly seems to distinguish elderly age-related discourse is the multiple-layering of identity and 'face' considerations. In the middle years, many would see disclosing age as an act which (in the terminology of Brown and Levinson, 1987) threatens a discloser's face -- both her negative face (the right to privacy and personal integrity) and her positive face (the wish to be well-regarded). During face-to-face interaction in later life, more directly face-threatening circumstances can be apparent to interlocutors, either through other categories of disclosure (cf. N. Coupland, J. Coupland, Giles, Henwood and Wiemann, 1988) or inferentially on stereotypical grounds (cf. Henwood, N. Coupland, Giles and J. Coupland, submitted). Under these conditions, the token of disclosing age may be played, as we have seen, to contextualise and so redress the more salient threat-to-face. Again, given that many elders' chronological ages will be 'in advance of' their contextual circumstances (they will be 'good for their ages'), the token then needs to be played to claim the credit that is due, and to promote positive face.

Still, we have also seen that face-loss can simultaneously be incurred during DCA sequences. First, the elderly discloser openly accepts whatever negative associations old age in itself stereotypically connotes. Then again, motivated self-disclosure risks being construed as egocentricity, which is readily accommodated within the stereotype of elderly talk. Most strikingly, DCA appears to invite, in response, behaviours which are otherwise counter-normative -- particularly the making of overt judgements and evaluations of others on the basis of appearance (cf. Berger and Bradac, 1983), processes which clearly threaten negative face. In this way, the disclosure of age, as we have previously argued in respect of quite different categories of elderly self-disclosure, paradoxically entails threats to the elderly identity it is designed to protect or enhance.

If these considerations seem to swing the balance away from DCA as functional in identity terms, we should not underestimate the existential function of interactional sequences in general, and perhaps particularly for the elderly (cf., again, N. Coupland, J. Coupland, Giles, Henwood and Wiemann, 1988). Several commentators in social gerontology have portrayed ageing as a time of radical uncertainty, and a time for coming to terms with some form of social 'disengagement', not as a socio-biological necessity (as some have argued; cf. Cumming and Henry, 1961) but rather as a societal imposition. Mutran and Reitzes (1981), for example, find the lack of community activities after retirement to be the strongest predictor of an older identity. Role-loss is well-established as an elderly characteristic (cf. Bengston, 1973; Kuypers and Bengston, 1973). Little wonder if the scarce resource of new first acquaintances (as it certainly is for the populations in the present data-sets) is employed by elderly people partly as a touchstone for evaluating where they stand developmentally, and for modifying this self-conception. Age-disclosure, as we have begun to characterise it in this paper, seems to offer one coherent set of interactional possibilities to enact this negotiation of one's status as 'elderly', and of one's own projectable self.

## Notes

* The research on which this paper is based has been supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, UK), reference number G0022220022.

The authors wish to acknowledge very valuable contributions made by Howard Giles, Karen Henwood and John Wiemann to the conceptual and empirical development of the paper.

[1] The data being reported in this paper, together with our initial speculations, are of course highly culture-specific, relating primarily to contemporary Anglo, and perhaps middle-class, groups in the UK. We eagerly invite correspondence particularly on the issue of cross-cultural variation in respect of age-disclosure in particular, and the sociolinguistics of ageing in general. Correspondence should be addressed to Dr. Nikolas Coupland, Centre for Applied English Language Studies, University of Wales College of Cardiff, Cardiff CF1 3EU.

[2] Some current examples of the genre carry messages such as: 'Twenty-nine again??'; 'Forty isn't old... if you're a tree'; 'Still nifty at fifty'; and 'Happy birthday to a unique person... most people your age are dead'.

[3] Interviewers were in fact trained, for purposes beyond our immediate interests here, to question interviewees in accordance with very precise encoding guidelines, with prosodic uniformity as well as identical forms of words in scripted initial exchanges.

## References

Atkinson, J.M. and Heritage, J. (eds.) (1984) Structures of Social Action: Studies in Conversation Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bengston, V. (1973) The Social Psychology of Aging New York: Bobbs-Merril.

Berger, C.R. and Bradac, J.S. (1983) Language and Social Knowledge: Uncertainty in Interpersonal Relationships. London: Edward Arnold.

Brown, P. and Levinson, S. (1987) Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coupland, J., Coupland, N., Giles, H. and Wiemann, J. (1988) My life in your hands: Processes of self-disclosure in intergenerational talk. In N. Coupland (ed.) Styles of Discourse London: Croom Helm. pp.201-253.

Coupland, J., Coupland, N., Giles, H. and Henwood, K. (sub.) Formulating age: The management of of age identity in intergenerational talk.

Coupland, N., Coupland, J., Giles, H. and Henwood, K. (1988) Accommodating the elderly: Invoking and extending a theory. Language in Society 17,1 pp.1-42.

Coupland, N., Coupland, J., Giles, H., Henwood, K. and Wiemann, J. (1988) Elderly self-disclosure: Interactional and intergroup issues. Language and Communication 8,2 pp.109-133.

Coupland, N., Henwood, K., Coupland, J. and Giles, H. (1988) Accommodating troubles-talk: The young's management of elderly self-disclosure. In G. McGregor and R. White (eds.) Reception and Response: Hearer Creativity and the Analysis of Spoken and Written Texts. London: Croom Helm.

Cumming, E. and Henry, W.E. (1961) Growing Old: The Process of Disengagement. New York: Basic Books.

Henwood, K., Coupland, N., Giles, H. and Coupland, J. (sub.) Stereotyping and problematicality in talk about elderly painful self-disclosure.

Jefferson, G. (1985) On the interactional unpackaging of a gloss. Language in Society 14 pp.435-66.

Kuypers, D. and Bengston, V.L. (1973) Social breakdown and competence. Human Development 16 pp.186-201.

Levin, J. and Levin, W.C. (1980) Ageism: Prejudice and Discrimination Against the Elderly. Belmont CA: Wadsworth.

Mutran, E. and Reitzes, D.C. (1981) Retirement, identity and wellbeing: Realignment of role-relationships. Journal of Gerontology 36,6 pp.733-40.

Rubin, A.M. and Rubin, R.B. (1986) Contextual age as a life-position index. International Journal of Ageing and Human Development 23,1 pp.27-45.

# PRAGMATIC CONSTRAINTS ON INTERROGATIVES IN SPOKEN FRENCH*

Aidan Coveney
(Department of French Studies, University of Newcastle upon Tyne)

## Introduction

It is well known that interrogative structures serve to fulfil a wide range of communicative functions, in addition to that of requests for information, which is probably their prototypical function. To what extent are the different structures in French used for complementary functions? Or, put the other way round, to what extent is the variation in structures conditioned by function? These questions will be addressed here with reference to a corpus of spoken French (for details, see Coveney (forthcoming)), in which a total of 177 Yes/No interrogatives and 117 WH-interrogatives were identified[1].

The interrogative structures which occur in the corpus are exemplified below, together with a formulaic representation of the structures:

(1) [SV] vous voulez la tisane?
(2) [ESV] est-ce que c'est bon aussi?
(3) [V-CL] Voulez-vous la tisane?
(4) [QSV] comment elles s'appellent?
(5) [QESV] qu'est-ce qu'il faut?
(6) [SVQ] on en était où là?
(7) [QV-CL] où allons-nous?
(8) [QV NP] en quoi consiste votre enquête?
(9) [QØV] qui y a été?

(key: S = subject clitic or Noun Phrase; CL = subject clitic; NP = subject Noun Phrase; V = verb; E = est-ce que/qui; Q = WH- word or phrase; Ø = empty subject position).

## Communicative Function

As a starting point in the examination of communicative function, it was decided to attempt to code each interrogative utterance for its illocutionary force. This was done for two reasons: firstly, because recent cross-linguistic research has demonstrated that the speaker's choice of interrogative structure in many languages is motivated by the illocutionary force intended by the speaker (cf Chisholm (1984 ); Sadock & Zwicky (1985)); and secondly, because it is well known that certain categorical constraints on French interrogatives are determined by the illocutionary force of the utterance. For example, in a request for action, with a finite verb in the present tense, the [SV] structure must be used (unless the verb is pouvoir, vouloir, or aller): both the [ESV] and [V-CL] structures being unacceptable:

(10) tu coupes un petit peu? (J2/130)
(11) *Est-ce que tu coupes un petit peu?
(12) *Coupes-tu un petit peu?

(11 and 12 would of course, be acceptable as requests for information.)

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 89-99
© the author

Speech act theory (including the concept of illocutionary force) has come in for severe criticism since it was first developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). For example Levinson (1985:285) states that '.... the conversational dependence of illocutionary force is such that the concept itself may be claimed to be substantially replaced by concepts of conversational function ...'. He later argues that '...intuitive use of categories like request should in fact be backed up by at least (i) a full sequential explication in terms of the range of expectable responses (like refusals, deferrals, compliances, etc.) and (ii) an account of the way that requests are typically formulated in order to obtain the desired responses...' (p. 368). But the expectable responses do not always occur, and moreover it is well known that different speech acts can be performed by means of linguistically identical utterances. Therefore the analyst will, at least occasionallly, need to rely on their intuitive understanding of categories such as offer etc. In such cases felicity conditions provide an explicit definition of the illocutionary force, and it should be recognised that they form one set of the defining properties of speech acts.

It has been found in this study that more categories and finer distinctions of illocutionary force are required than has generally been recognised in order to handle the interrogatives occurring in a corpus of natural spoken language: for example, rather than a single illocutionary force of 'questioning', several different sub-categories of 'requesting' are needed (cf. Martins-Baltar (1976) and St Pierre (1977). In other cases two discoursal parameters (quoted and self-addressed utterances) will be employed to modify a traditional speech act category. It should be pointed out that the discoursal modifiers may reflect the fact that the utterance does not have the same force (and hence felicity conditions) as the unmodified speech act. For example in a quoted request for information, the speaker does not actually want to know the information. However, it is useful to indicate the speech act originally intended by the person being quoted, as in some cases the linguistic form of the quoted interrogative is still determined by this.

Although the categories of communicative function (CF) employed in this study will be derived basically from those of illocutionary force, this does not imply a dismissal of the importance of conversational structure. On the contrary, this, together with intonation and other contextual factors provides crucial clues for the hearer and the analyst in identifying the CF intended by the speaker. Nor is it denied that utterances have one or more conversational/discoursal function(s) additionally. There is indeed reason to believe that conversational function exerts a significant influ- ence on the speaker's choice of interrogative in French. Furthermore, certain utterances seem to have no illocutionary force, but a very clear conversational function, and in these cases it is this which will provide the utterance's CF category, eg a 'pre-announcement'.

It will be clear by now that the CF categories used in this study are rather eclectic. However, in order that any interconnections between CFs and the interrogative structures should be perceived more easily, the CFs have been placed in the following broad CF groupings:

(i) Speaker expects addressee/hearer to respond: eg request for information, 'biased' request for information, request for action, offer, greeting.

(ii) Speaker expects him/herself to respond (speaker apparently does not know the answer at the time of utterance): eg self-addressed request for information.

(iii) No response expected (or speaker already knows at the time of utterance the response s/he will give): eg quoted question, rhetorical question, echo filler, 'sub-topic introducing question', pre-announcement, post-announcement.

Yes/No Interrogatives

The number of tokens of Yes/No interrogatives for the three communicative function (CF) groupings is shown in Table 1, together with the percentage of [SV] and [ESV] tokens in each grouping.

TABLE 1

| CF Grouping | N | [SV] | [ESV] |
|---|---|---|---|
| H to respond | 126 | 96.8% | 3.2% |
| S to respond | 4 | 75% | 25% |
| No response (or answer known) | 47 | 34% | 66% |
| Total | 177 | | |

Clearly in this corpus when a response is expected from the addressee, the [SV] structure (usually with final rising intonation$^2$) is overwhelmingly preferred: the small number of cases in which [ESV] is used will be discussed below. Using my own (non-native) intutitions to make acceptability judgements on potential utterances with the alternative structures, 48 categorical tokens were identified. In almost all these cases it is the CF of the utterance (rather than a linguistic contraint) which renders the alternative structures unacceptable. The only categorical [ESV] token is shown underlined in (13): its CF is that of an 'echo filler':

(13) B: ....euh *quand* - [ENTER S]
S: *Bertrand* est-ce que je peux avoir des agraffes et de la colle?/
B: est-ce que tu peux avoir des agraffes et de la colle?/
S: s'il te plaît./ (C/174)

Of the 47 categorical [SV] interrogatives, 38 are 'biased' requests for information, clarification, etc. in the sense that the speaker expects a particular response, whether positive or negative, as in (14), (15), and (16):

(14) D: ... et vous n'avez toujours pas d - n'avez pas de colos qui marchent chez vous?/
A: non non/ (D/694)

(15) A: ... ça veut dire quoi conseiller prud'homme?/
E: conseiller prud'homme? - tu sais pas ce que c'est que les conseils de prud'hommes?/ (E/668)

(16) K: ....alors/ y a pas c'est pas à onze heures du matin ou à?/
*(pour le) repas hein.*/
A: ah non *quand même - fin*/ (K/931)

Of the remaining categorical [SV] interrogatives, two are requests for action, and one (17) is a quoted request for action:

(17) O: .... par exemple y a une petite fille qui me dit 'ah j'ai/ je me frotte les - les noeuils euh tu me mets de de la couleur sur les noeuils?'.... (O/317)

Notice that in this case the CF of the original utterance (a request for action) still constrains the structure used, even though the quotation could be seen as part of a larger utterance with the CF of 'assertion'.

As will be apparent from Table 1, [SV] is very much the 'unmarked' variant of the (YNQ) variable, and [ESV] the 'marked' variant, with [V-CL] being non-existent. What factors motivate a speaker to use the marked [ESV] structure? Söll (1982:47) found that, in children's speech [ESV] interrogatives were generally found at the beginning of a 'conversational unit' or introduced a new topic. Grundström (1973:25), among others, has reported that [ESV] rather than [SV] tends to be used in lengthy questions so that the speaker can signal straight away that the utterance is a question. It has also been suggested (eg by Vigner (1978:88) that est-ce que is a marker of politeness. All three of these explanations receive some further support when we examine the CFs of the 36 [ESV] questions in the data. Thirteen tokens have the illocutionary force of 'self-addressed requests for information/opinion' as in (18) and (19):

(18) P: ...culturellement on a eu une influence là-dessus./mais est-ce que c'est bien ou mal? je sais pas. (L/468)

(19) W: .../alors est-ce que ça sera toujours des maternels? euh (j'y suis pour rien quoi)/ (W/416)

However, they differ from ordinary requests for information, not only because they are self-addressed, but also in that the speaker clearly knows, at the time of uttering the question, the answer s/he is about to give. Conversationally, they are rather similar to what Comrie (1984:40) has called 'topic-introducing questions'. However, the tokens in (18) and (19), and the others, are not 'topic-introducing' but rather 'sub-topic introducing questions'[4]. Just four of the 36 [ESV] interrogatives are used for CFs which anticipate a response from the hearer/addressee. S's question in (13) above is an indirect request for action ('indirect' because it formally resembles a request for permission). Since S (female, aged 18) is interrupting B (male, aged 35, director of the camp) to ask him to give her some goods, this constitutes a relatively weighty face-threatening act (in Brown and Levinson's (1978) terms) hence the indirectness of the request, and also the use of [ESV] rather than [SV]. Three other [ESV] tokens can be explained similarly, since they were requests for information made by two female informants who were socially rather distant from the male fieldworker. The 'heaviness' or length of the question seems to have motivated the choice of [ESV] in just a few cases, such as (20):

(20) W: ...est-ce qu'y a une v philosophie derrière le fait de dire ' euh
les gamins ne remontent pas dans leurs chambres'?/ (W/438)

Far more significant however is the fact that quoted interrogatives tend to have the [ESV] structure: 15/23 non-categorical occurrences.

### WH- interrogatives

The range of different CFs which WH- interrogatives fulfil is far more limited than in the case of Yes/No interrogatives, but the picture is complicated by the larger number of variant structures. The number of tokens for the three CF groupings is given in Table 2, with the percentage of the six variants for each grouping. (The seven categorical tokens are excluded here.)

TABLE 2

| CF Groupings | N | [QSV] | [QESV] | [SVQ] | [QV-CL] | [QV NP] | [Q0V] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H to respond | 30 | 13.3% | 43.3% | 33.3% | 3.3% | 3.3% | 3.3% |
| S to respond | 34 | 35.3% | 41.2% | 14.7% | 11.8% | - | - |
| No response (or answer known) | 46 | 23.9% | 52.2% | 4.4% | 6.5% | 4.4% | 6.5% |
| TOTAL | 110 | | | | | | |

We shall examine in turn the evidence for pragmatic constraints on [QV NP], [QESV], [QSV] and [SVQ]. ([QV-CL] and Q0V] are both very infrequent in the corpus, and are, in any case, largely constrained by socio-stylistic and linguistic factors respectively.)

There are just three instances of [QV NP]: this is principally due to the fact that subject NPs generally are rather infrequent in the data (this being typical of continuous, uninterrupted discourse, especially in interviews, when new topics tend to be introduced by the interviewer, rather than the informant). Indeed, there are no other WH- questions in the corpus where [QV NP] could have been used. I am assuming here that right and left-dislocation of NPs which are coreferential with the subject clitic are motivated by other discoursal factors. Hence in (21)

(21) child: William/
W: oui/
child: (...) - Gérard il m'a donné une claque/
W: mm/ alors ça/ où il est Gérard?/ (W/559)

W used this structure because the entity, *Gérard*, was 'given' in the discourse. The right-dislocated NP is traditionally considered to be external to the clause, and does not have intonational prominence - unlike the NP in [QV NP]. One of the three instances of [QV NP] in the data is very nearly categorical: compare (22) with potential alternatives (23) and (24):

(22) G: ... où est l'inconvénient?..... (R2/565)
(23) * où l'inconvénient est?
(24) ? où l'inconvénient est-il?

The unacceptability of (23) and the doubtful status of (24) are probably both due to the principles of 'end-focus' and 'end-weight' (cf Leech (1983); Quirk *et al.* (1985)), according to which longer and more informative constituents tend to occupy the end-position in the clause. The monosegmental copula *est* is the lightweight constituent *par excellence*, and is probably always unacceptable finally with a subject NP. The use of [QV NP] therefore seems to be motivated by the presence of a subject NP which is 'new' in the discourse. In (25) and (26) this also represents the new topic or sub-topic, as is reflected by the presence of the discourse marker *mais*:

(25) B: ... et puis on discutera si/si nous aussi on a envie (qu'ils reviennnent) avec nous ou pas/ hein / mais - *comment d'habitude se fait se faisait notre groupe*? - eh bien - bon je te dis .... (C/1173)

(26) A: ... fin la fin d'août je compte aller en Lorraine un petit peu parce que j'ai des amis (qui habitent là-bas....)/
C: mais *en quoi consiste votre enquête*?/ (R/1142)

Turning now to [QESV], the pragmatic constraints are of much less significance than a linguistic one: the overwhelming majority of the occurrences (45/51, non-categorical) are with *que* as the WH- word, and this is largely because *que* (and its variant *quoi*) cannot occur in [QSV]. Of the six [QESV] tokens with a different WH- word three may have been motivated by pragmatic factors. (27), a request for information, was addressed by a 50 year-old female informant (hence *vous* again) to the 26-year old male fieldworker, and could therefore be regarded as a relatively weighty 'FTA', requiring the extra politeness marker of *est-ce que*:

(27) K: à quelle heure est-ce que vous mangez l'assiette anglaise?/ (K/939)

Two further examples, (28) and (29), were quoted from the telephone or written language, where [QESV] is more likely to be used. (28) was additionally, an indirect request for action:

(28) P: .... on téléphone on écrit en disant 'mais quand est-ce que vous venez nous inspecter? on veut vous voir' euh/ (L/780)

(29) W: ... ils m'ont téléphoné 'quand est-ce que vous pouvez venir?' ... (W/119)

However, there is no obvious pragmatic motivation for the choice of structure in the three other [QESV] questions with WH- words other than que, nor is length of utterance apparently a factor here.

The [QSV] structure, which is generally considered to be non-standard (cf Wagner & Pinchon (1962:542); Grevisse (1986:657)), is used in only four of the 30 WH- questions when a response is expected from the addressee/hearer (in one of these, the addressee was a child). However, it is used considerably more with the other two CF groupings (see Table 2). It may be that informants avoided it when addressing questions to the fieldworker because it is considered less polite, due to its non-standard status.

It is with the [SVQ] variant that we find some of the strongest discoursal constraints operating. In order to increase the number of examples of [SVQ], five questions from non-informants present will be added to the 17 variable tokens in the corpus. Inspecting these interrogatives, we find that:

(i) they are generally rather short, with very few adverbials or complements

(ii) the verbs are mostly of low informational value: 12/22 are être, others include (il) y a, avoir, faire, s'appeler, consister; three others (vouloir, s'en aller, arriver) are 'given' (ie 'evoked textually or situationally', in Prince's (1981) terms).

(iii) three of the subject pronouns are cases of 'ellipted' il, two are 'empty' ce/ça.

(iv) 7/22 of the WH- words are combien, which tends to collocate frequently with minimal subject + verb combinations such as c'est, ça fait, il y a.

In (30), (31), and (32) it can be seen that the underlined elements of the [SVQ] interrogatives are all 'textually evoked'. ((30) follows on immediately from (13) above).

(30) B: je crois que là y a une agrafeuse./ (combien . . . .) pas beaucoup y en a encore./
S: merci./
B: tu en veux combien, d'agrafes?/ (C/179)

(31) A: on a essayé notre association a essayé de faire des colos binationales (. . . . ) enfin pendant quinze ans quand même/ moi j'en avais pas fait mais il paraît que ça marchait *relativement* bien
D: *(ils) marchaient bien?*/
A: et ils en ont fait en Angleterre en France un petit peu mais maintenant avec toutes les affaires la crise chez nous/ ils ont commencé à fermer des centres qu'on utilisait* (. . . .)*
D: *euh vous* faisiez ça dans quoi? dans des dans des écoles dans des?/ (D/706)

(32) X: est-ce qu'on peut sortir avec les trente-cinq gosses? - *(on est deux)*/
L: *vous êtes* combien?/ (J/280)

And in (33) the underlined elements are also given ('situationally evoked'):

(33) [LONG SILENCE]
R: mais vous êtes en France pour combien de temps?/

Clearly the given elements of the [SVQ] interrogatives in (30) - (33) are quite uninformative and the speaker in each case can presuppose quite certainly that the addressee knows what little information they do convey. It should be mentioned however, that the potential alternative utterances to (30) - (33) with the WH- elements in clause-initial position would not be unacceptable, even in the same context: the difference would seem to be that, the speaker would be presupposing the given information less strongly than in the [SVQ] utterances. If we consider now certain questions with the WH- element 'fronted', we shall see that the potential [SVQ] alternatives are somewhat anomalous in the discourse context. First, let us compare (34) and (35):

(34) B: qu'est ce que tu veux?/ [TO N LOOKING IN THROUGH WINDOW FROM OUTSIDE] (C/1284)

(35) Tu veux quoi?

Saying (35), B would presuppose strongly that N wanted something, whereas she had not given any indication of this. (Additionally we could note that (35) would be less polite than (34).) In (36),

(36) [INTERRUPTION]
D: bon qu'est-ce que tu m'avais demandé?/ (D/416)

(37) Tu m'avais demandé quoi?

D needed to remind her interlocutor that he had asked her a question, and therefore chose not to present this as given information, as would be the case in (37). Similarly, in (27) and (28) by using a 'WH- fronted ' structure, the speakers are weakly presupposing the information in the SV(C) part of the clause. If they had said (38) and (39) instead,

(38) Vous mangez l'assiette anglaise à quelle heure?

(39) Mais vous venez nous inspecter quand?

they would have been strongly presupposing the SV(C) information. This would have been quite inappropriate in the context of (27) since the addressee had not confirmed that the English do eat the assiette anglaise. Similarly, in the context of (28), in using the [SVQ] structure, the speaker would have seemed to be strongly (and inappropriately and impoliteley) presupposing that the addressee was indeed coming to inspect them. Another constraint operating on [SVQ] is that the structure cannot be used for rhetorical questions, like (40) and (41):

(40) K: ... oui mais alors où allons-nous? hein/ c'est là ou c'est la fin hein - des centres./ (K/762)

(41) K: ... y a pas d'ouvrages pour eux / qu'est-ce que vous voulez qu'ils fassent?/ et a tout est mécanisé euh/ (K/346)

The explanation for this may be as follows. [SVQ] puts the WH- element in the stressed 'focus' position and is, in a sense, the 'emphatic question' structure. Rhetorical questions, on the other hand, are 'non-questions', since no response is expected, and their illocutionary force is that of an emphatic assertion. Notice, however, that [SVQ] can be used in 'sub-topic introducing questions' (although other structures seem to be preferred):

(42) P: ... alors ça consiste en quoi? eh ben- ça consiste euh à animer / à animer un groupe d'animateurs c'est le cas de le dire (J/24)

Conclusion

We can summarise the main findings in this paper as follows:

(i) In identifying the communicative function of interrogatives, it was found necessary to employ concepts of discoursal/ conversational function in addition to illocutionary force.

(ii) In Yes/No interrogatives, [SV] is the unmarked variant, [ESV] being used notably when no response is expected, and for politeness.

(iii) In WH- interrogatives, linguistic and discoursal constraints appear to outweigh other pragmatic factors: specifically, [QV NP] is used when the NP is new; and [SVQ] is used when the SV(C) information is strongly presupposed by the speaker.

Finally, a word of caution is in order. The number of tokens is, in some cases, insufficient to provide strong evidence of some of the tendencies mentioned, and, moreover, the simultaneous presence of many different factors means that it is not always clear which are the principal factors motivating the speaker's choice of structure on a particular occasion.

## NOTES

* Thanks are due to the following for their help and advice on various points: T Butler, J N Green, G Hare, J Law, A Lodge, G McGregor, I Mason, L Milroy, C Ogus, M Stewart. I alone bear responsibility for the shortcomings. Special thanks are due to Professor Le Page for his encouragement and inspiration over many years. The support of a grant from the Small Grants Research Sub-Committee of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne is gratefully acknowledged.

1. This article deals in more detail with some of the areas hinted at in my paper at 'SS7', which was entitled 'Variation in interrogatives in spoken French' and was principally concerned with methodology.

2. Fónagy and Bérard (1973:95) found that 36.8% of their [SV] questions did not have a distinctively interrogative intonation, but were nevertheless recognised as questions because of the conversational context.

3. Terms to describe this type of question have proliferated: in addition to 'biased' (coined by Moravcsik (1971) according to Sadock & Zwicky (1985)) Leech (1983:166) uses 'loaded', Quirk et al (1985:808) prefer 'conducive', Wagner & Pinchon (1962:547) have 'dirigée', Fónagy and Bérard (1973) use 'implicative'.

4. In Conversation Analysis they might be termed 'pre-announcements', but I prefer to reserve this term for questions such as:

> T: ...tu sais pourquoi il (ne l') a pas eu? parce qu'il avait oublié de mettre la ceinture./ (T/743)

But notice that, since T does not pause for the addressee to respond, his interrogative does not serve to check the newsworthiness of the subsequent announcement, which Levinson (1983:354) states as the function of pre-announcements.

## References

Austin, J L (1962) How To Do Things With Words, Oxford: Clarendon Press

Brown, P & Levinson, S (1978) 'Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena', in Goody, E N (ed) Questions and politeness, Cambridge: CUP

Chisholm, W S, Jr. (ed) (1984) Interrogativity, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins

Comrie, B (1984) 'Russian', in Chisholm (ed)

Coveney, A B (forthcoming) Grammatical variability in spoken French, PhD thesis in preparation, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Fónagy, I & Bérard, E (1973) 'Questions totales simples et implicatives en français parisien', in Grundström, A & Léon P (eds)

Grevisse, M (1986) Le bon usage, (12th edition, revised by A Goosse) Gembloux: Duculot

Grundström, A (1973) 'L'intonation des questions en français standard', in Grundström, A & Léon, P (eds)

Grundström, A & Léon P (eds) Interrogation et intonation, (Studia Phonetica 8) Montréal: Didier

Leech, G (1983) Priciples of Pragmatics, London: Longman

Levinson, S (1983) Pragmatics, Cambridge: CUP

Martins-Baltar, M (1976) 'Actes de parole', in Coste, D, Courtillon, J, Ferenczi, V, Martins-Baltar, M, Papo, E, et Roulet, E Un niveau-seuil, Paris: Hatier

Moravcsik, E A (1971) 'Some cross-linguistic generalisations about yes-no questions and their answers', Stanford University Working Papers on Language Universals 7: 45-193

Prince, E F (1991) 'Toward a taxonomy of given - new information', in Cole, P (ed) Radical Pragmatics, New York: Academic Press

Quirk, R, Greenbaum, S, Leech, G, & Svartik, J (1985) A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, London: Longman

Sadock, J & Zwicky, A (1985) 'Speech act distinctions in syntax', in Shopen, T (ed) Langauge typology and styntactic description, vol. 1 Clause structure, Cambridge: CUP

Saint-Pierre, M (1977) Aspects pragmatiques des interrogatives globales en français de Montréal, unpublished PhD dissertation, Université de Montréal

Searle, J R (1969) Speech Acts, Cambridge: CUP

Söll, L (1982) 'L'interrogation directe dans un corpus de langage enfantin', in Hausmann, F-J (ed) Etudes de grammaire française descriptive, Heidelberg: Groos

Vigner, G (1978) Savoir-vivre en France, Paris: Hachette

Wagner, R L & Pinchon, J (1962) Grammaire du français classique et moderne, Paris: Hachette

# Twixt the Scylla of total assimilation and the Charybdis of suicidal purism.

N. Denison

The topic of this paper is inspired by current trends towards conservation and recuperation measures in favour of threatened minority languages in pluriglossic communities. I have in mind really small communities ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand speakers, not the kind of community which is ever likely to be in a position to demand equality before the law for its language, or its use as a medium of higher education.

We cannot of course take it for granted that conservation measures are objectively desirable. The preservation of linguistic (or any other kind of cultural) diversity has not so far been shown unequivocally to contribute to the sum total of human well-being. Indeed, work on the negative correlation between the presence of many languages within a third world country and its economic developmental prospects suggests the opposite, if material considerations are to the fore in the computation of happiness. Moreover, diversity, if emphasised, can undeniably lead to ethnic conflict. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe that diversity _must_ lead to conflict, or, more specifically, to violence; and if happiness is at any rate partially measurable in non-material terms, there is at least no evidence to suggest that well-being of this kind is _diminished_ by pluriglossia.

The fact is that some members of some threatened minority speech communities _are_ concerned to prevent the loss of their own special idiom, for whatever reasons, and they occasionally turn to linguists for help. Moreover, there are now more signs of concern among minority speech communities for the survival of their threatened varieties than was the case only a few decades ago. There is also somewhat more understanding and good-will among representatives of majority languages towards minority linguistic groups in their midst than hitherto, and

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 101-113
© the author

this has in some cases led to an improvement in the financial means and the legal framework available to the latter for the preservation of their speech traditions. Here, a cynic might observe that minority concern is unfortunately seldom voiced with real force until it is too late, or almost so, and majority support (especially state action in the shape of publicly financed conservation programmes) rarely materialises until there is no longer any danger of an ethnic or political challenge from the minority culture, by which time its prospects of linguistic survival or recuperation are in any case slim.

Nevertheless, a linguist who finds himself approached for advice and/or help in such a situation is confronted, if he accepts, by a number of questions which he cannot answer with anything like certainty. Such is the interesting but difficult position in which the author of this paper currently finds himself, the specifics of which can best be summarised by recourse to the first person and the anecdotal:

For over twenty-five years I have investigated and described, as dispassionately as possible, the linguistic and sociolinguistic circumstances of Sauris in N.E. Italy - see e.g. Denison 1968, 1969, 1969a, 1971, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987. Originally a German (S. Bavarian) linguistic island on Romance, more specifically Friulian, language territory in Carnia, it has undergone the integration of this whole area first into the Venetian, more recently into the Italian sphere and thereby into the realm of the Italian language. Whereas the grandparents' generation and their immediate forbears were turned by this process into fluent triglossic speakers of Sauris German, Friulian and Italian, children in Sauris these days, like children elsewhere in Italy, tend actively to acquire only a variety of standard Italian. This of course implies the immediately impending demise of local languages and dialects in Italy (as in many other parts of the world, unless the trend towards national standard monolingualism can be reversed). It has provoked a certain amount of reaction in Friuli in favour of preserving the local languages. Correspondingly, in Sauris, there is a move to rescue Sauris German.

I now find myself hauled down from my ivory tower and conscripted into a local action group who plan to have the idiom taught to their children in primary school. They require, in less than no time at all, a standard orthography, a dictionary, a grammar and texts for school use. It must be said in their favour that is only very recently that the necessary legal and financial prerequisites for such a development have become available.

Whilst I have the gravest doubts whether the educational and formalisational measures now envisaged will have any direct impact on the seemingly irreversible course of Sauris German towards extinction, I nevertheless feel obliged to respond to the appeal for help. And this brings us back face to face with the problems of principle and application which present themselves in this connection.

Perhaps the first general service one can perform is to attempt to sort out from the arguments commonly advanced against total linguistic assimilation those which on closer examination appear spurious or weak, and see what remains. Secondly, one can see what implications then emerge for the linguistic task of extraction, abstraction and codification to be undertaken in support of minority language rescue and recuperation..

We can only briefly summarise the discussion of arguments commonly advanced for conservation:

1) The appeal to straightforward communicative needs is largely spurious: major languages (like Italian in our specific instance) can take care of such purely informational needs as well or better, after the shedding of the minority variety or varieties, that is, after the completion of language replacement. However, if a minority variety is to be preserved on other grounds, the maintenance of communicational efficiency will be necessary, if speakers are to be persuaded to continue to acquire and transmit their minority code.

2) Arguments for minority language conservation are automatically arguments in favour of at least diglossia/pluriglossia (in the sense of functionally determined language alternation) in the minorities concerned, if not for full bilingualism/plurilingualism. No-one seriously advocates the complete economic, social and cultural isolation of minorities in the modern world which minority monolingualism would entail, in view of the notorious reluctance of majorities to add to their linguistic equipment minority languages of minimal prestige and usefulness.

Until recently this need of linguistic minorities to assume the burden of competence in the majority language in addition to competence in their own variety, tended to be accepted as an implicit cost item. A further disadvantage resulted, for, as bilinguals, linguistic minorities have been exposed to the traditional prejudice of the monolinguals, reinforced by investigations purporting to demonstrate in bilinguals deficits in areas such as psychic stability, loyalty to the state, intelligence quotients and, more recently, portraying them as "semilinguals" (this latter claim coming from would-be champions of linguistic minorities!).

In part offsetting this apparent negative balance against bilingualism there is now (in addition to counter-arguments on all the above points) some experimental evidence that plurilinguals do better than monolinguals on tests of cognitive flexibility - see e.g. Hornby 1977. However, since the assumption must be that the more separate and distinct the codes are, the greater the spin-off for this kind of flexibility will be, this argument applies better to plurilingualism involving languages structurally remote from each other than to varieties which through long contact in pluriglossia already show a greater or lesser degree of structural and semantic convergence (the degree of coincidence between Sorbian and German structure often referred to, or some of the varieties in Indian pluriglossia as described by Gumperz (e.g. 1971, 251ff.) are examples of extreme underlying convergence). If anything, the intellectual flexibility argument could be used to halt, and where still possible to reverse, such assimilatory trends; that is, it would be a point in favour of purism and the emphasising of structural and especially semantic distinctiveness.

3) Arguments based on group solidarity and distancing functions of minority varieties are legitimate if the values to be emphasised are seen as positive ones. That conflict and even violence can ensue requires no demonstration, but there is presumably no inevitability about such developments. How far greater linguistic distance of the minority from the majority variety implies a greater distancing of the culture and attitudes of speakers is unclear.

4) Appeals to emotive, affective and aesthetic needs are not a compelling reason for maintaining minority varieties, since the majority language can take over such functions - which it already performs for its monolingual speakers - subsequent to assimilation. Even where the claim is made that there are specific minority group needs of this order, there is no reason why they cannot be satisfied, after near-total linguistic assimilation, by the minor distinctive means which still persist (e.g. for the Welsh, by Welsh intonation in English, after Welsh as a language has been abandoned). This is therefore not a good argument against far-reaching linguistic assimilation, and no kind of argument for maximum structural distinctness or purism.

5) The soundest argument, finally, which speaks both for minority language conservation and for resistance to rapid assimilatory trends in linguistic substance and creativity - for a moderately purist position, that is - derives from historical-cultural considerations.

At this point it will be as well to spell out why the most extreme purist position is as fatal as the most extreme acceptance of assimilatory forces for the survival of a minority language variety. The second of these attitudes leads to the death of the minority variety through replacement by the majority variety both of its situational functions and of its linguistic substance. The first, the extreme purist attitude, amounts to an attempt to prevent a language from adapting itself to constantly changing reality - it is an attempt to freeze structure and use by absolute grammatical prescription. The fate of classical Latin is eloquent testimony to the outcome of such attempts.

The historical-cultural position argues for historical continuity in the minority variety as part of the general cultural and historical heritage of its speakers.

This can most realistically and enrichingly be understood within a compound ethnicity, containing other linguistic and cultural strands too, but linked with a clear determination not to surrender, in particular, the historical minority linguistic tradition which is not infrequently the chief identifying characteristic of members of the sub-group vis-à-vis non-members and towards each other. In other words, there are here elements of the group solidarity motivation and the emotive connotation mentioned above.

The argument in this form, however, makes no claim to superiority or even to parity vis-à-vis other languages or varieties; rather, it values the continuity of a distinct historical language tradition for its own sake, as an additional dimension to the life and identity of its speakers and a heightening of their sense of being the specific linguistic and cultural bearers of a unique tradition. It can also be seen as an enrichment for speakers of other language communities, as a contribution to the sheer diversity of existence, in particular to the diversity of linguistic realities, "windows on the world".

Assuming that the argument for language maintenance is accepted, what, very briefly, are the linguistic and planning consequences ? Here the situation in Sauris must serve as exemplification. Quite obviously, no specific claims can be made as to generalisability, though certain elements in the situation will be familiar to field workers from other language areas.

The task involved for Sauris German (SG) is, first of all, to codify the object of description, and this in turn means identifying and abstracting that part of the total SG linguistic repertoire which the village speech community feels to be its own unique possession vis-à-vis other strands of the repertoire to be labelled Friulian or Italian, bearing in mind that SG has hitherto been the L-variety in Sauris triglossia, unwritten and unread by the majority of its speakers. I cannot here begin to discuss the theoretical and practical difficulties of this linguistic task. Suffice it to say that it is at this point that the linguist, even if he has previously felt uncomfortable about the performance/competence dichotomy, comes face to face with the full enormity of the task of codifying the structure of one "language" from a pluriglossic repertoire.

A maximally liberal approach would accept as SG all utterances in Sauris whose macro-syntax was non-Italian and non-Friulian, and then take this definition as the framework within which to codify micro-structure and lexis. A maximally restrictive approach would attempt to exclude from the micro-structure many of the elements which occur in SG texts but also in Friulian or Italian texts in Sauris.

Turning now to planning, my present attitude is that all efforts at codification and schooling will be to no avail unless this contributes to persuading those still capable of socialising children from birth in SG to continue to do so or to recommence doing so. And even then it may be too late.

Secondly, the codification of SG should proceed on mildly conservative rather than too liberal lines. Maximum detachment from Italian and Friulian should be the aim in the code, with the minimum achievable interference in parole. This principle should also apply to the orthography. Produce and teach a specifically SG model, but accept from children anything which can be deciphered (as hitherto)! Modern German should not be a source of etymological or orthographic convention, nor of innovation in structure or lexis, since modern standard German is not understood or spoken by most people in Sauris. SG was isolated from the main body long before present-day standard German began to emerge, and any subsequent influence has been negligible. Necessary new loans should be from Friulian and Italian, extant integrated loans from these sources should be retained, but sporadic borrowings should be reduced wherever possible.

Specifically SG structures in syntax, word-formation and semantic structure (including "idiom") should be preferred over alternatives which SG shares with Friulian and German. This should be so even where (especially where) the grandparents' SG version involves a more complicated rule than the Friulian or Italian influenced, "younger" alternative. There should be no sanctions - educational, social or otherwise - on failure to comply with this principle, but children should be encouraged to be interested in, and proud of, the idiosyncracies of their grandparents' SG vis-ã-vis Friulian and Italian.

The problem is that totally laissez-faire attitudes to rapid structural assimilation in use militate against precisely that prestige of, and pride in, SG, which the introduction of SG in school is supposed to enhance, in order to encourage its renewed transmission to,acquisition by,and use amongst,children. Aggressive and extreme purist attitudes to SG, on the other hand, make acquisition (in part through voluntary participation in school classes) of SG seem an unnecessary (since "difficult") cultural luxury. Either extreme appears likely to contribute to the final extinction of SG. It is therefore between the Scylla of total assimilation and the Charybdis of suicidal purism that an enlightened linguistic policy for SG must steer. The appendix represents an attempt to put a little flesh on the bare bones of the ideas presented above by means of exemplification from the Sauris situation.

## Appendix

a) Orthographic conventions and models. These are inextricably bound up with the uncovering and display of independent SG phonemic structure and pronunciation. We must ask for whom the task is to be undertaken and for what purpose. In our case the chief beneficiaries are the present (and hopefully the future) speakers of SG, not general linguists or Germanic scholars, and the purpose is school support for the preservation of a hitherto largely spoken tradition. Bridge-building to connect with other standard orthographies or structures (German or Italian), though it is an incidental consideration for a few pedagogically interested members of the working group, cannot therefore be allowed to obscure the chief aim, which must be to enable the independent spoken structure of SG to be represented as directly as possible by written symbols and vice-versa.

In particular, attempts to render historical SG sound changes transparent by orthographic means are unnecessary, they obscure synchronic SG phonemic structure (see Denison 1986) and complicate sound-to-symbol and symbol-to-sound conversion. Hence bile [bi:le] - will, bar [bar] - bar, bosser [bɔsər] - water, hase [ha:ze] - hoarse, hose [hɔ:ze] - hare, house [houze] - stocking, ib(e)r [i:b(ə)r] - over, groas [grɔas] - big, greasser [grɛasər] - bigger, gros [grɔ:s] - grass, plant, greiser [greizər] - plants (and not, for example, wille/Wille, War(Bar), Wasser/Wåsser, häse (- hoarse) Hase/Håse (-hare), Hose (-stocking), über, groß, größer, Gras/Grås, Gräser. Similarly, vues [vuəs] - foot, viesse [vɪəse] - feet (and not Fuß or Wuß (!), Füße or Wüße); čurče [tʃurtʃe] - conifer cone (and not Tschurtsche, German style,or ciurcie/ciurce, Italian style - č is not totally unfamiliar to those SG speakers who have at least some experience of trying to read various written representations of Friulian).

Extreme innovative solutions tend to be rejected: hence ss vs. s is acceptable for [s] vs. [z] medially - where it has a tradition in local Italian and is known to a few from standard German - but not initially, where ss- is unacceptable to SG speakers. Therefore baissn [baisn] - whitewash - versus baisn [baɪzn] - direct, drive - but not ssel [sɛl] - that - versus sel [zɛl] - there. Likewise ssaldot for [sal'dɔ:t] - soldier-or ssan for [san] - Saint-are unacceptable.

b) Extraction of SG syntax

This is not an all-or-nothing issue. According to register, actual texts show sentence macro-structures ranging from marginally SG to totally SG: Code-extraction recommendations based on the relative purism principle would order the following phonetically transcribed examples as follows, beginning with the least desirable (Romance features underlined):

də zeɪnt dis'pɔsti tsa mante'ne:ran də prɔ'pɔste 'valide - They are prepared to keep the offers open. (Better: də zeɪnt dis'pɔst tsa mante'ne:ran də prɔ'pɔstas 'valɪt. Better still, in the current state of domain specialisation, code-switch to Italian for this type of topic!).

də gru:pɔs vam pluəte zeɪnt net gɛən da'kɔrdɔ- The blood-groups didn't match. (Italian: I gruppi del sangue non andavano d'accordo. German: Die Blutgruppen haben sich nicht vertragen. SG also traditionally uses nominal compounds corresponding to Romance noun phrases such as gruppi del sangue - blood-groups - and is not lacking in compounds in which the first element is of relatively recent Romance origin, e.g. samöriakha:ze, dɛ'brɛakha:ze (two kinds of cheese), but more recently still Italian noun phrases tend to be rendered by SG noun phrases such as gru:pɔs vam pluəte. Compare the co-existence in Romance influenced English of the type blood-groups alongside the type bunch of flowers (German Blumenstrauß). Hence SG gru:pɔs vam pluəte should not be faulted on purist grounds. On the other hand the much used SG gɛən da'kɔrdɔ - to agree (Italian andare d'accordo) - can be replaced (and in the recorded text from which the example is taken actually was replaced in a subsequent formulation) by SG vi:nən- zɪ, which is etymologically referable to German sich finden but means "to get along with, to take (a liking) to". Hence də gru:pɔs vam pluəte ɔnt-zɪ net vu:nən is the syntactically (and lexically) preferable SG formulation.

Where there is some syntactic variation in SG but enough consistency in the usage of the oldest speakers to establish a clear principle (the linguist is also guided in this task by reference to historically closely related Austrian dialects), the considerations discussed above will lead to a recommendation that the already extant degree of consistency be elevated to the status of a grammatical rule. However, the precise form of the rule may require careful consideration and certain questions will be best left open, for future developments in usage to settle.

In particular one must beware of adopting rules from other varieties of German. For instance, the distribution of the prepositional forms af(-) and an(-) in SG is determined on morphological grounds alone, not in any way semantically conditioned, as in other forms of German (contrast standard German auf and an). For details see Denison 1977. Again, word order rules for SG need to be carefully formulated, with a sufficient degree of latitude to allow for variation in acceptable usage (acceptable, that is, to the "best" native speakers available). For SG word order, see Simon 1973.

The relation between the dynamic/static opposition and the case agreement for certain prepositions is relevant for SG as for related German dialects, and this is a point of structural difference vis-à-vis Italian and Friulian which requires pedagogical emphasis. However, certain fluctuations even in older SG usage may mean that modifications in rule formulation are necessary.
For instance, one good informant felt that in a poem written a generation ago, the formulation - addressed to a swallow (and here phonetically transcribed) - də pɪʃt khemen af maɪn zölder (acc.) - you have come on to my balcony - should rather read də pɪʃt khemen af maɪme zölder (dat.) - you are come on my balcony - because z ɪʃt ʃɔn do: (-it is already here)! For the present tense or for an imperative form with khemen - come - on the other hand, he would prefer the accusative! However it is clear that the accusative in such cases is never acceptable for static semantics with the relevant prepositions.

The oldest and most traditional living usage equally permits us to prescribe the static/dynamic differentiation between ga - to - and tsa, - at - with certain place-names, even though the youngest speakers have largely lost it.

On the other hand, where an adjective without an article follows a preposition which otherwise requires the dative case, most speakers now prefer a non-oblique adjectival form with neuters: hence mɪt vɑɪrɪgəs ʃmɔlts rather than mɪt vaɪrɪgəme ʃmɔltse - with hot butter, although the version with a definite article regularly receives dat.

agreement: *mɪme vaɪrɪgŋ ʃmɔltse* and although we have set phrases like *pa ʃɛame to:ge* - in broad daylight.

### c) *Lexis*

It is impossible to discuss here in the necessary detail the theoretical and concrete issues involved. Nothing actually used by more than one SG speaker more than once in a macro-syntactically SG utterance can be excluded a priori. However, *in general*, SG lexis goes together with SG *micro*-syntax and SG idiomatic phraseology, so that a scale of desirability which highly values SG traditional lexis will at the same time give preference to the most distinctively SG idiom, favour traditional SG (even though only residual) productive devices (e.g. derivational suffixes) and thereby enhance morphological transparence, will prefer calques (where available) to straightforward loans and thereby facilitate morphological and syntactical integration (since unintegrated Romance items often occasion difficulties and limitations in this area). The following examples are listed with the least desirable variant first, alternatives in increasing order of desirability:

*iɲɔ'rantsa*, *iɲɔrantɪkhat* - stupidity, ill manners; *bɛ'lɛtsa*, *ʃɛanɪkhat* - beauty; *fi'at*, *'le:bər* - liver; *a:rs*, *trukhən* - dry; *fa'mɛa*, *hauslaɪt* (vraɪntʃɔft) - family (relations); *amitʃitsja*, *mi:gŋʃɔft* - friendship. *in'dʒi:r/pal'ku:l ne:mən*, *pam'ɔrʒe ne:mən*, *'ɔnvɛçtn* - tease, make fun of.

*z ɪʃt ɪnu:tɪl*, *z ɪʃt dɪbant*, *s tuət net nɔat/ z ɪʃt net vanɛatn* - it is unnecessary/useless.

*ɪ pɪn dɛl sɛ'tanta'trɛ*, *ɪ ɔn vɪntsən jo:r* - I am 15 years old.

## References

Denison, N. 1968. Sauris: A Trilingual community in diatypic perspective. In: MAN Vol. 3/4, 578-592.

" 1969 . Sociolinguistics and Plurilingualism. In: Actes du X$^e$ Congres International de Linguistique, Bucarest 1967, 551-559.

" 1969a. Sociolinguistic Aspects of Plurilingualism. In: Intern. Days of Sociolinguistics, ed. by Istituto L. Sturzo, Rome, 255-278.

" 1971. Some Observations on Language Variety and Plurilingualism. In: ASA monographs 10, Social Anthropology and Language, 157-183.

" 1977. Language Death or Language Suicide? In: Intern. Journal of the Sociology of Language 12, Language Death, ed. by R. Wodak and W. Dressler, 13-22.

" 1979. Zur Triglossie in der Zahre. In: Standardsprache und Dialekte in mehrsprachigen Gebieten Europas (= Akten des 2. Symposiums über Sprachkontakt in Europa, Mannheim 1978), ed. by S. Ureland, Tübingen, 27-37.

" 1980. Sauris: A Case Study of Language Shift in Progress. In: Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik 32, 335-342.

" 1981. Conservation and Adaptation in a Plurilingual Context. In: Sprachkontakt, ed. by W. Meid and K. Heller, 33-52.

" 1984. Language Acquisition in a Plurilingual Environment. In: Grazer Linguistische Studien 21, 35-64.

" 1985. Aspetti Linguistici e Sociali della Pluriglossia in Friuli e in Austria. In: Incontri Linguistici 10, 21-32.

" 1986. Sociolinguistics, Linguistic Description, Language Change and Language Acquisition. In: The Fergusonian Impact (= Ferguson Festschrift )I, ed. by J.A. Fishman et al., Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, 83-98.

" 1987. Romanisches im Zahrer Deutsch. In: Akten der Theodor Gartner-Tagung, Innsbruck 1985, ed. by G.A. Plangg and M. Iliescu, 255-262.

Gumperz, J.J. 1971. Language in Social Groups. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Hornby, Peter A. (ed.), 1977. Bilingualism. Psychological, Social and Educational Implications. Academic Press, Inc., New York, San Francisco, London.

Simon, H.J. 1973. Sintassi friulesca a Sauris. In: Studi Linguistici Friulani I: Udine, 110-120.

# DIALECT TRANSMISSION AND VARIATION:
## An Acoustic Analysis of Vowels in Six Urban Detroit Families

Toni Deser
[Boston University]

## [1] Introduction.
### [1.1] Overview.

This study is a micro-sociolinguistic analysis of familial dialect variation and as such is about speakers rather than language systems. In particular, its purpose is the investigation of childrens acquisition of their native dialect. Dialect variation can be a source of synchronic as well as diachronic change. Thus, a dialect's variability is closely tied to its transmission to the succeeding generations. And as such patterns of dialect convergence and divergence between parents, children and their peers can say much about both the phylogenetic and ontogenetic aspects of language development.

### [1.2] The Data Base

The data to be discussed in this study are taken from Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley's 1966 Detroit Dialect Study in which a total of 700 people were interviewed: most importantly, however, was that they were interviewed as family groups. One parent and two of his/her children in each family were interviewed separately for about an hour. These family groupings allow for a direct comparison between the parent dialect (albeit only one, unfortunately) and the children's (for more details see Shuy et. al's 1968 Field Techniques book).

The present study focusses on only a small subset of these Detroit informants: six Black families in which the children ranged from nine to twenty years of age. Aside from the fact that parents and their children were interviewed, the other main advantage of these speech data is that at this period of time in Detroit many of the Black adults were immigrants from the South Central States[1]. This immigrant group of parents has, then, brought with them the Southern dialect as an adult dialect model for the next generation, their children. Thus, the ambient local dialect of Detroit, a Northern Cities one contrasts greatly with that of these Southern immigrant Black adults. A situation of dialect contact, therefore, exists in Detroit at this period of time.

All of the children reported on in the present study, however, were born and raised in Detroit. Thus, these data afford the opportunity to 'see '(and hear) normally invisible processes at work. Thus, they enable one to ask questions of the following sort: what conditions constrain the child's allegiances towards his/her parents' dialect, the peer group dialect, and if it differs from the aforementioned varieties, the local ambient dialect. Also how do such factors as age, sex, and peer group influence come into play? Among these Black children, to what extent is the Southern dialect adopted versus that of the local one, and is it necessarily an all-or-none phenomenon? In order to answer these sorts of questions about the child's allegiance strategy a dual dialect speech community of this kind in which two identifiably distinct dialects exist is extremely informative. Of course, the fact that this is a situation of dialect contact is not intrinsic to the basic premise of this investigation but merely provides an example of a clear-cut type of situation in which the child's dialect choice can be documented and quantified.

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 115-128
© the author

[2] Perceptual Categorization of Speakers.

Acoustic phonetic analyses were used to distinguish between dialects in a quantitative and objective manner. Prior to these acoustic analyses of vowel variables, however, a dialect perception task was administered in order to objectivize judgements regarding the general dialect group that each of the Black speakers belonged to: a Southern or Northern U.S. speech community. Three speech-language pathologists blind to the race and family relationships between the speakers as well as to the purpose of the study categorizated these speakers. On the basis of this forced-choice perception task, the 18 speakers were labelled as belonging to one of three dialect groups : A, B, or Mixed. Anchor speakers were used in order for the judges to create their own dialect categories without reference to particular dialect labels to bias them. The A group refers to those speakers who were judged to be Detroit-like or Northern; and the B group to those who were labelled as Southern-like and the Mixed group to those who were given equivalent numbers of A and B votes by the three judges. Table 1 indicates how these dialect labels fell out with respect to the families overall and each of the three members within them.

Families Selected for Acoustic Analyses:

| | Family | Parent | Child1 | Child2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A's | Harper | A | A | B |
| | James | M | A | A |
| | Shawn | A | M | A |
| B's | Atkinson | B | B | A |
| | Sanders | M | B | B |
| | Jones | B | M | B |

Table 1

Dialect Distribution

Key: Child1 = elder child, Child2 = younger child; A = Detroit-like,B = Southern-like, M = Mixed Dialect.

In order to refer to these families more easily, they have been labelled as either A or B families based on the classification of two out of three of its members. Table 2 below reports some demographic information about these 18 speakers.

| | Family | Integration (%Blacks) | Social Index | Parents' Dialects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A's: | Harper | 50 | 46UM | Louisana, NY State |
| | James | 11 | 32UM | Detroit,Detroit |
| | Shawn | 21 | 46UM | Detroit, Indiana |
| B's: | Atkinson | 50 | 74LM | Georgia, Georgia |
| | Sanders | 33 | 115LW | Detroit, Alabama |
| | Jones | 75 | 109LW | Kentucky, Illinois |

Table 2

Demographic Description

Key: Social Index; UM = Upper Middle Class, LM = Lower Middle Class, LW = Lower Working Class. Score is based on Hollingshead (1958) in which higher scores represent decreasing degrees of education, prestige of occupation, and quality of residence, see Shuy et. al. (1968).

### [3] Acoustic Analyses.

The major focus of this paper is on the findings of the acoustic analyses. All vowels were measured spectrographically using a Digital Kay 7800 Sound Spectrograph to make broad band spectrograms. Due to the nature of the casual style interview, all ten tokens of each vowel could not be controlled for consonantal environment. However, as all speakers were discussing games they played and other leisure-time activities many of the lexical items used were the same. Only stressed syllables and primarily monosyllables were used for measured tokens. No nasal consonant environments were used.

In addition to these casual style tokens, a set of five tokens of each vowel were taken from a passage read by each speaker. As the passage was identical for most speakers these tokens could be matched exactly from speaker to speaker[2].

### [3.1] The /AI/ Variable.

Table 3 outlines the strategy for the choice of vowel variables I investigated. The approach used is a kind of plus-minus strategy. In other words, certain values of these variables are interpreted as indicators of the speakers' dialect allegiance. So as is notated in that table Southern speakers are marked by the use of unraised /ae/ and monophthongized /ai/, whereas the Northern ones are marked by raised /ae/ and diphthongized /ai/.

| VARIABLES | SOUTHERN | NORTHERN |
|---|---|---|
| (1) /ae/ | - = [ae] | + = [E ] |
| (2) /ai/ | + = [a:] | - = [ai] |

Table 3

Variable Coding Scheme

Key: + = presence of feature; - = absence of feature

The /ai/ variable tends to monophthongize in Southern American English, a fact which can be used as a quantifiable acoustic measure that is capable of differentiating the Northern from the Southern speakers. In order to quantify the degree of difference or similarity between the children and their parents, this measure needs to be independent of vocal tract size because of the normalization problem. Since diphthongs have formant trajectories moving between two different vowel target positions, the differences between the formant values of these two targets can be calculated relative to each other so that the absolute formant values (which can vary according to vocal tract size) aren't critical.

Besides these advantages, /ai/ has several others: it is high-frequency, it has a shibboleth-like status for the Southern dialect and compared with other diphthongs the two vowel targets are maximally distal in the vowel space (moving from low central to high front). This latter quality simplifies the task of quantifying the degree of differentiation between the two targets in both the F1 and F2 dimensions . That is, the more diphthong-like a token is,(i.e. having a Northern type target), the more differentiated or distal the vowel-final F1 and F2 values will be. Whereas, in the Southern variety, the monophthongal quality translates to the two targets, initial and final, being very close in frequency since the vowel maintains a relatively steady state configuration in marked contrast to the diphthong's time-varying pattern.

In the following discussion of the formant measurements 'A'speakers refers to those speakers judged to produce a Northern-like dialect and 'B' to those judged to use a

Southern-like dialect. In figures 1c-1g the six families productions of this vowel are depicted. Each figure represents a single family. The axes in these scatterplots represent differences in Herz, between the beginning and end of F1 versus differences between the beginning and end of F2. Thus, Northern A-like speakers should tend to have tokens falling in the upper portions of the graphs. That is, large differences between the initial and final portions of F1, as well as for F2, translates into large Herz values on these graphs. Each plot represents one three-member family with each member's plot symbol next to his/ her name, age, and dialect group indicated on the legend to the right. Those tokens falling in the upper portion indicates an A-like token or a more differentiated distribution pattern of initial and final vowel targets.

In figures 1c and 1f, the A or Northern families, Harper and Shawn, one may notice that, indeed, the A parents Richard SR and Elizabeth display an overall distribution pattern of tokens higher in the graph than do their elder children. In the Shawn family the two daughters, Monica and Marcia, also display a fairly differentiated distribution, although the oldest daughter, Monica, who was scored as Mixed is not nearly as diphthongized as her A mother (i.e.the dash markers generally fall below her mother's askerisk markers). The Harper family, similarly, shows the oldest child Richard JR, although an A speaker overall, to be very B-like in his monophthongized /ai/ realizations, while his younger B brother looks more like their A father. Thus, in both these families it appears that the older child has distanced himself from this parent, perhaps as a form of rebellion; whereas the youngest speaks more like the parent model. This appears to occur irrespective of the speaker's overall dialect label, as can be seen by a sort of dialect allegiance reversal for this variable.

The James family, figure 1b, with a Mixed father also shows the oldest, Linda, to be more Northern-like in her use of diphthongized /ai/'s . So although she is slightly more diphthongized than her father (at least for this particular diphthong), in the Harper and Shawn families, on the other hand, the eldest children seem to tend toward a greater degree of monophthongization than do their parents. In table 2 above, perhaps, not coincidentally, it can be seen that the James children attend a school with only 11% Blacks whereas the Harper children go to a school with 50% Black children. Thus, Linda differs from the Harper and Shawn children not by the fact that she has differentiated herself from her parent-model because the eldest in these families are similar in this respect as just noted; but rather in that she tends not toward the Southern norm for this variable, as do the Harper and Shawn eldest children, but rather toward a Northern one. And as mentioned above, this seems to suggest that the kinds of dialect models that the child is exposed to have a great impact on the child's dialect 'choice'.

In the case of the B families, however , like Atkinson, figure 1a, and Jones, figure 1d, it appears that the oldest children are closer to the parent model than the youngest ones (notice that in both these families, the dashes and asterisks are closer together while the squares fall at higher formant values). So although Pat Atkinson has more diphthong-like /ai/'s than her father, her younger brother Darryl is much more A-like in his pronunciations. And Oliver Jones is even more B-like than his younger B sister on this variable, that is to say, more similar to his father.

Lastly, the Sanders family in figure 1f, resembles the A families in that the eldest daughter, Geraldine, produces much more monophthongal /ai/'s than her mother. But her younger sister, Debbie, also labelled as a Southern speaker, has more diphthong-like /ai/'s which resemble her mother's pronunciation of this variable to a greater degree.

Thus, it appears that dialect allegiances are more powerful than familial ones. That is, the B families, Atkinson and Jones, whose eldest children appeared least rebellious, in

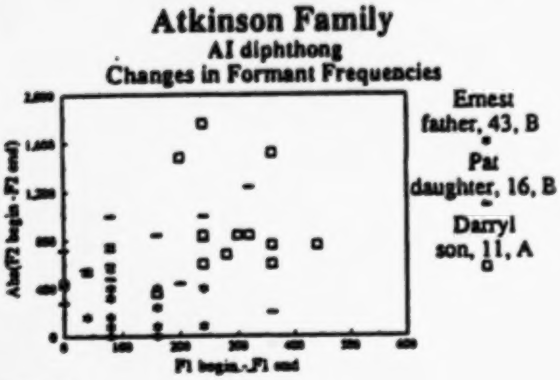


Figure 1a

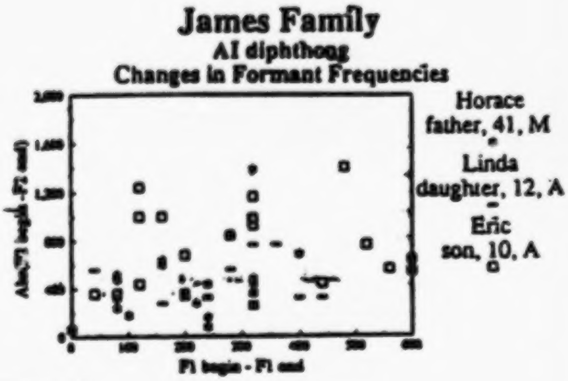


Figure 1b

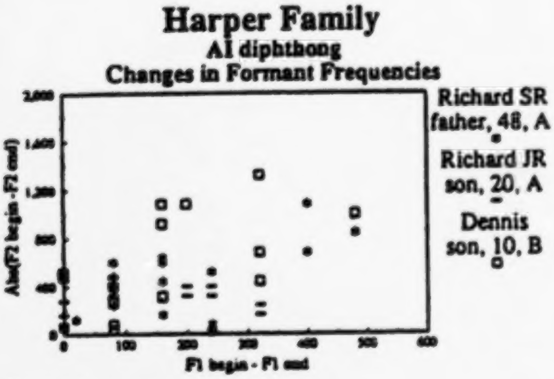


Figure 1c

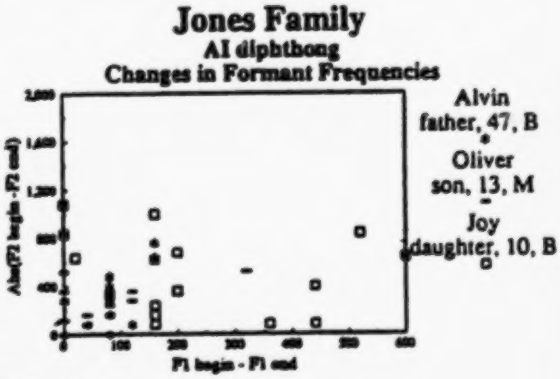


Figure 1d

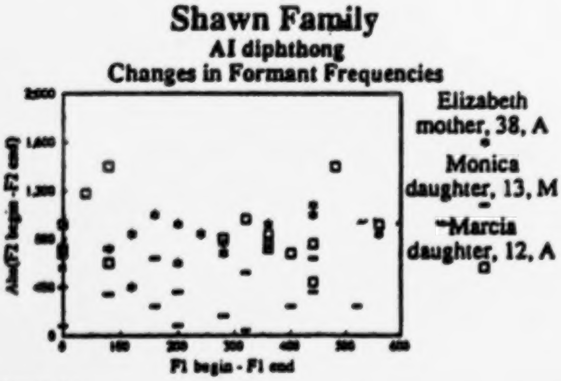


Figure 1e

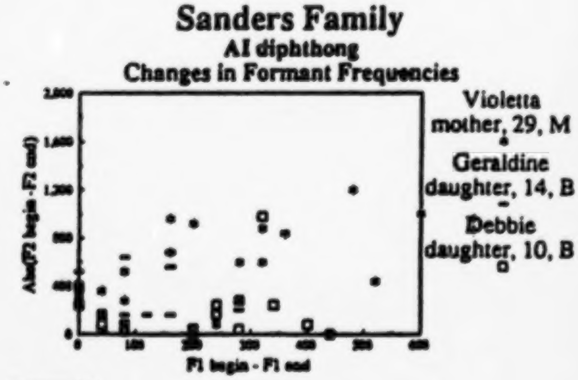


Figure 1f

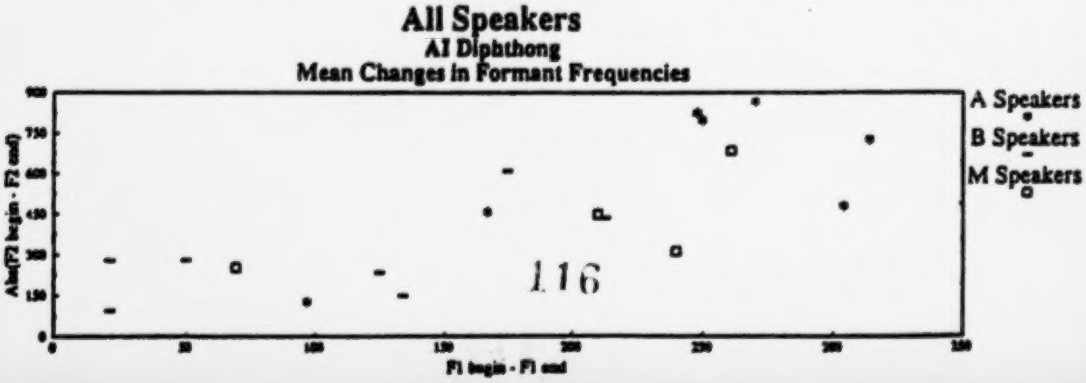


Figure 1g

fact, are aspiring to maintain their Southern dialect even though they have grown up in Detroit. It so happens that the parents in these two families have Southern dialects which coincides with the fact that the schools these children attend are 50-75% Black. So although they aren't rebelling against their parents or peers, in fact, they are attempting to maintain their familial Southern identities in face of the Detroit norms they encounter just outside their family and school environments.

The A families' pattern in which the eldest is more differentiated from the parent dialect, i.e. their /ai/'s are closer to the Southern variety than their younger siblings', actually resemble the B families. Thus, in the Harper and Shawn families the eldest children are very similar to their B family counterparts in that they, too, want to maintain their Southern identity.

The Sanders family, although a B family, has an eldest child who also produces more Southern-like /ai/'s than her younger sister even though both are B speakers. Thus, Geraldine, the eldest, is just like the elder children in the A families in that her mother is not fully a Southern speaker, (she is Mixed), so as her daughter, she distances herself from her mother in terms of her dialect's phonetic realizations in order to maintain her Southern identity.

The younger children, on the other hand, tend to be more A-like or Northern irregardless of their parents' dialect model. These younger children appear to have a stronger Detroit identity than their older siblings do. Thus, in the James family, the youngest Eric, is more diphthongized than either his father (who is Mixed) or older sister who is also an A speaker (similar to the Sanders family in which theirs is a Mixed parent). However, Linda James is a bit of an anomaly because even though she is the elder child she opts toward the Northern variety of a diphthong-like pronunciation of /ai/. The explanation is suggested by the following demographic facts: 1) she attends a school with only 11% Blacks, 2) both her parents are native Detroiters, and 3) her family's social index is the highest of all six families: her father is a dentist. Thus, she is clearly motivated towards a white Detroit norm by everyone she comes in contact with.

It turns out, then, that when production of phonetic level variables is examined in terms of the individual in relation to his/her family members, a subtle pattern of allegiance and divergence can be tracked. An individual belongs simultaneously to a dialect community, a peer group, and a family structure and as such there must be a tension on that individual as s/he develops their identity vis-a-vis these various groups. Production of the /ai/ variable as diphthong or monophthong correlated most strongly with the age and family dialect group of the child as to whether s/he diverged or converged with their parent and, therefore, with a particular dialect community in urban Detroit. The major trend suggested by these data, then, is that in the A families the elder children tended to diverge more from their parents as the younger ones converged more toward them, whereas in the B families the converse situation prevailed.

### [3.2] The /ae/ variable.

The second variable investigated, /ae/ raising, involves more complex issues of measurement and speaker comparison. Because the measured formant values vary according to vocal tract size differences between speakers, comparisons between tokens across speakers is not as straightforward as for the /ai/ variable./AE/ tends to be raised towards /E/ in what is called by Labov and others the 'Northern Cities Shift'(Labov, Yaeger, Steiner 1972). Thus, the Northern speakers are expected to show a raised /ae/ target compared with the Southern speakers. Raising translated into acoustic measurement terms means that F1 is lowered and F2 is raised relative to an unraised variety.

Besides the /ae/ vowel, three point vowels were also measured, 10 tokens of each one, E, i, and ^ ,(inverted V)[3], were measured for each speaker. In an attempt to find out whether this /ae/ represents a vowel in flux, undergoing change in Detroit at this time perhaps as a result of these various influences, both casual and read style tokens were measured. Ten tokens of the spoken and eight tokens of the read style were measured for each speaker (except as noted in ff. 2). This strategy follows that of Yaeger (1975) in which she advocates not only looking at variation across speakers but within speakers across styles. Thus, if a vowel is undergoing change it will exhibit systematic variation between targets of the casual and careful speech styles.

> 'when more than one style of speech is examined for a given speaker, it becomes evident that the speaker aims at more than one target position, i.e., that his target for vowels in spontaneous style is not merely a less clearly articulated, controlled style target, but a target in its own right'(op. cit.:5)

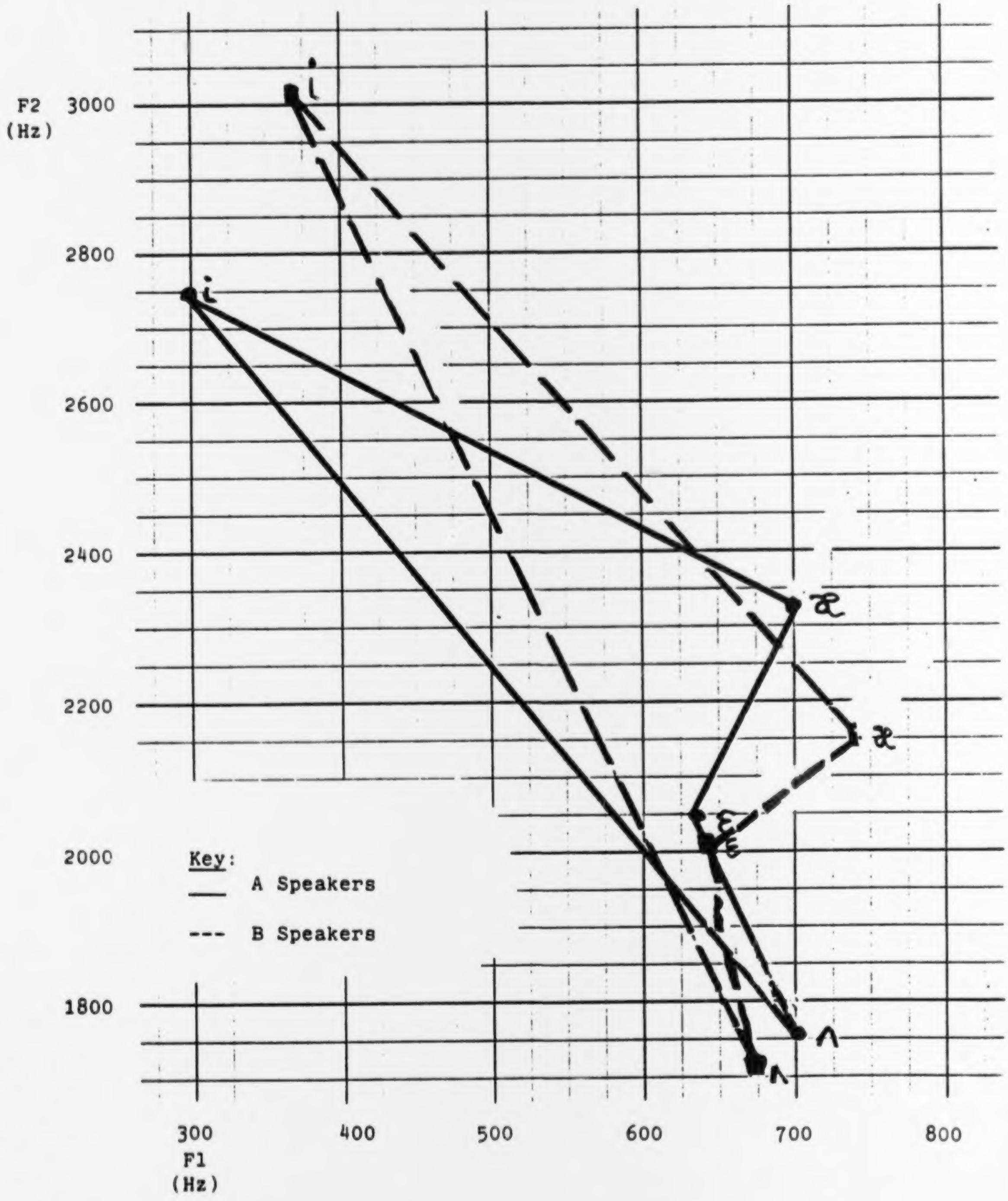
Thus, while /ae/ was hypothesized to be in a state of flux these point vowels were not and therefore expected to show less influence of style changes.

Before delving into a description of the individual patterns for this variable a few general remarks about the findings. First, the casual or spoken style /ae/'s (as they will sometimes be referred to) don't show a raising effect by the A speakers overall; but for the read tokens, which were much more closely matched for phonetic environment, raising can be detected in the speech of these informants. Second, because females and males show major differences in their formant values, i.e. males simply have lower voices, or fundamental frequencies, this can swamp the raising effect. However, if speakers are seperated by sex then the formant values can be compared across dialect groups in a more reliable manner. So that when the F1 and F2 means for the read style for /ae/ are averaged together for just the A-speaking girls they do show a certain degree of raising compared with the B girls' /ae/'s. These young A women's average formant values in the read style are 700 and 2330 versus 740 and 2160 for the young B women, which indicates some degree of raising in these A speakers[4]. See figure 2 for a graph of the averaged means for each of the four point vowels. This graph shows that the two dialect groups of speakers have overlapping but non-identical vowel spaces. When all A and B speakers' averaged means are compared, there is a very slight tendency in the direction of raising. However, the males in the two dialect groups don't show this raising relationship; it is difficult to assess whether this is simply due to the small sample size here, or whether there is a real difference in their vowel targets[5].

If now the speakers are categorized irrespective of sex, so that all A children are compared with all the B children, the A group, again, does display a slight raising effect over the B group for this vowel: for read /ae/'s the young Northern speakers had combined average F1 & F2 values of 667 and 2133, respectively, while their Southern counterparts produced formant values of 670 and 2037. Thus, in fact, the males' formant values don't succeed in entirely swamping the raising effect. This suggests a certain degree of robustness to these raising differences between the two dialect groups. This is an important point because in order to show that there are systematic and interesting differences among members of each of the six families it is necessary to show that mean formant values between the A and B groups overall do exist.

Finally, how do individuals within family structures behave? In figures 3a-3f, each family's members' individual /ae/ tokens in both styles as the means for each speech style are graphed. The open circle and square indicate the spoken and read mean, respectively. The most significant aspect of these scatterplots is the spatial relationship between the two means both within and between speaker. Specifically, the raising phenomenon can be detected by searching for the open square, or read mean, and noticing when it appears

Figure 2 A vs B Females: Mean Formant Values (read)



above and to the left of the open circle, or spoken mean, because this indicates a raising at least across styles within a single speaker. If a child's voice is higher pitched, for example, then both formants shoud be higher so the tokens would fall in the upper right hand corner whereas if it were real /ae/ raising the tokens should cluster in the upper left hand corner of the graph.

The A parents for the families Harper and Shawn both have younger children whose /ae/'s are raised beyond their own even though these two children belong to different dialect groups. In figure 3b notice that the youngest Harper appears to be a bit of an anomaly: first, although Dennis was actually labelled as a B speaker, his Northern-like /ae/'s relative to his father's indicate a possible desire to be accepted into a particular peer group. So he is obviously quite motivated to be A-like on this variable. His mean values for the spoken and read styles are raised above his father's (the differences don't show up on this graph). That is, F1 is lowered and his F2 is raised, thus his higher pitched voice could not explain this completely since then both formants would be raised. In the case of the Shawns, in figure 3f, Marcia the youngest, an A speaker raises her /ae/'s beyond her mother's in the read style, suggesting her desire to produce a more of a Northern-like target for this vowel than even her A mother. This kind of result in which the younger children appear to raise their /ae/'s toward the A-like norms regardless of their general dialect group, is consistent with the pattern just described for the /ai/ variable.

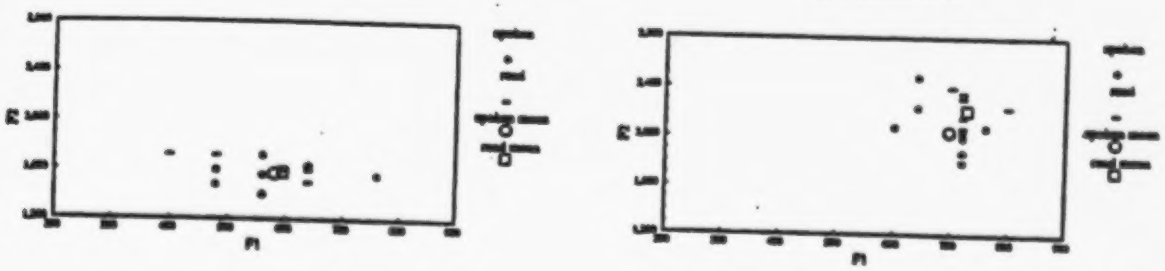
The James family, in figure 3c, has a Mixed parent and two A children. The youngest, Eric, again, just as in the Harper and Shawn families reported above, also raises both his spoken and read /ae/ means well beyond his father's and even his A sister's. Thus, his /ae/ target is the most Detroit-like in his family as he seeks to gain acceptance by the white community and since his school is only 11% Black this makes some sense. He is more A-like than his older A sister on both variables but, again, this is part of the general pattern that runs through these data: younger children appear to move toward Northern targets regardless of their parents' dialects.

Now for a discussion of the B families. The Jones family, in figure 3d, is perhaps the most intriguing in that the father, Alvin, and his youngest child, Joy, seem to both have identifiable different targets for each style. In the casual style, Joy has greatly increased her F2 values relative to the read one. Although, this is not strictly raising as indicated earlier, it mplies that she is self-conscious about her /ae/ pronunciation. Interestingly enough, her formal style /ae/ is most distant from the local raised variant. This result is consistent with the probable kinds of peer group influences on her since her school is 75% Black. Her father, Alvin, on the other hand, seems to use the slightly more raised /ae/ variant in the more formal read style. So although he is a B speaker he emulates the local raised variant of the A speakers when speaking formally. However, he appears to be relatively sure of his Southern-like pronunciation as can be seen by the two style means close spatial alignment in the graph

In figure 3a, the Atkinson family has a pattern that is not surprising, in that Darryl the youngest, an A speaker, does show a substantial raising effect over his B sister's /ae/'s. While both children have read means which are in the raising direction, their father's two means are nearly identical for the two styles indicating that he unlike them, is quite secure with his B dialect. While they, on the other hand, may want to participate more fully in the native Detroit speech community.

Finally, the Sanders family, in figure 3e, seem to care least about emulating the Detroit dialect. The mother, who is Mixed, does raise her /ae/'s above both her daughters

## Atkinson Family
### Vowel ae
### Spoken vs Read


**Ernest, father, 43, B**

**Pat, daughter, 16, B**

**Darryl, son, 11, A**

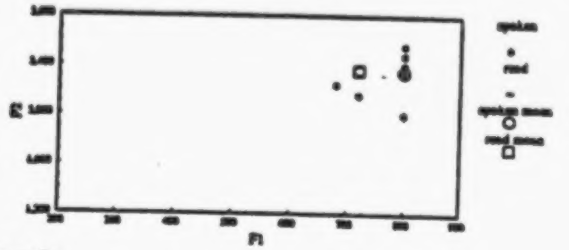
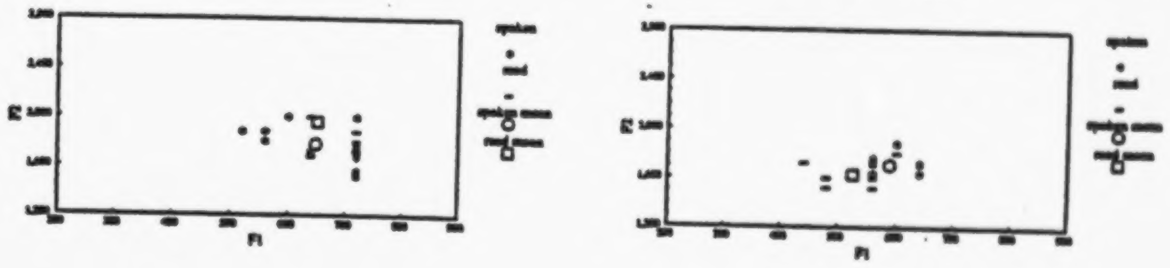


Figure 3a

## Harper Family
### Vowel ae
### Spoken vs Read


**Richard SR, father, 48, A**

**Richard JR, son, 20, A**

**Dennis, son, 10, A**

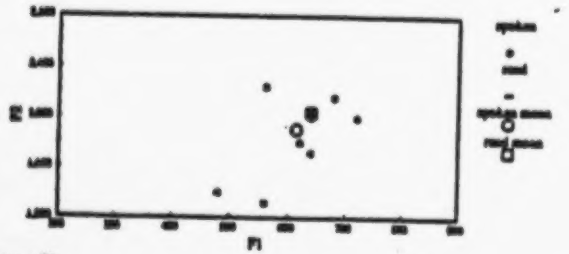


Figure 3b

# James Family
## Vowel ae
## Spoken vs Read

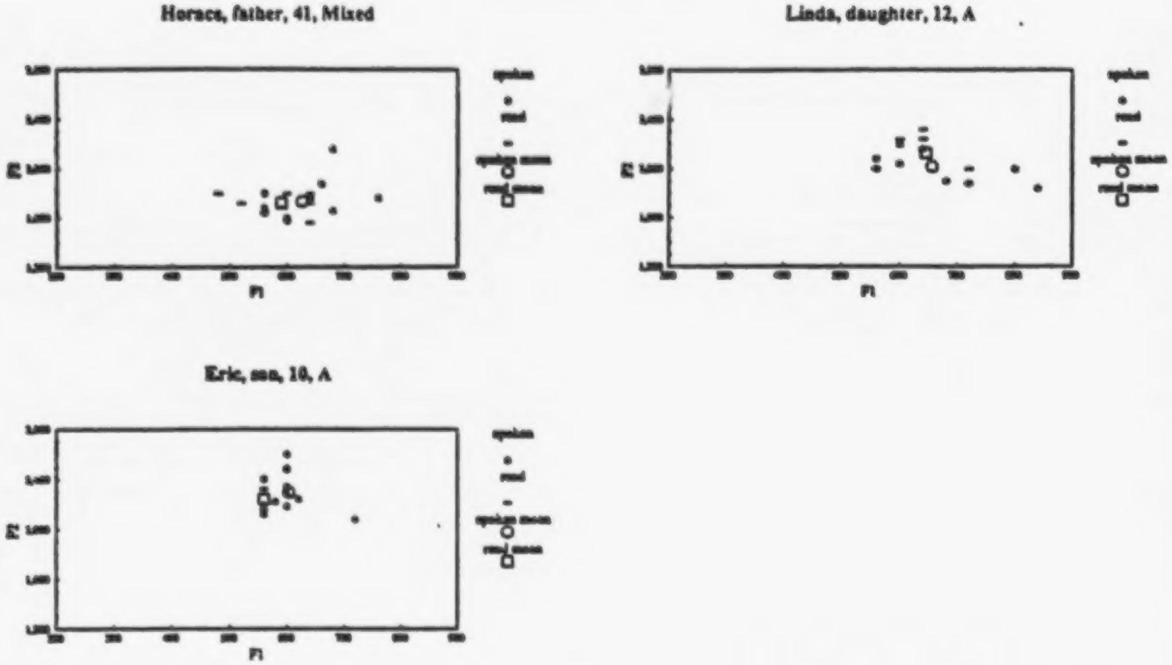


Figure 3c

# Jones Family
## Vowel ae
## Spoken vs Read

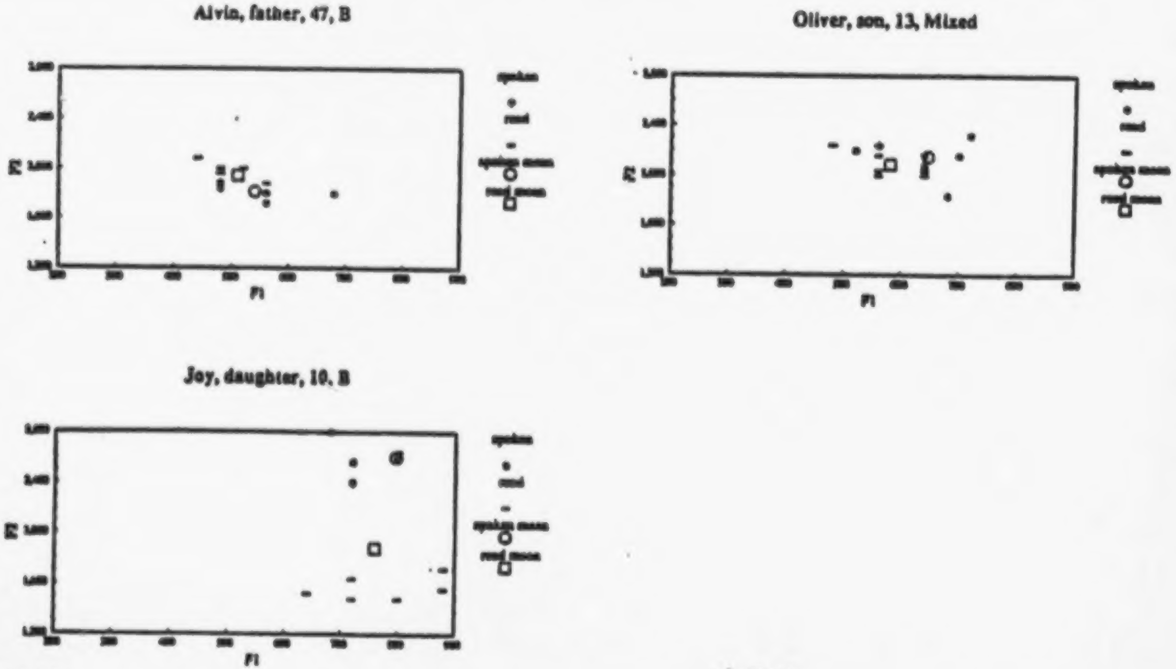
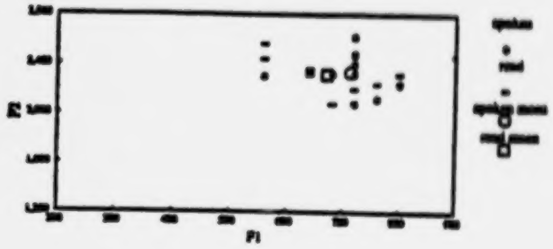


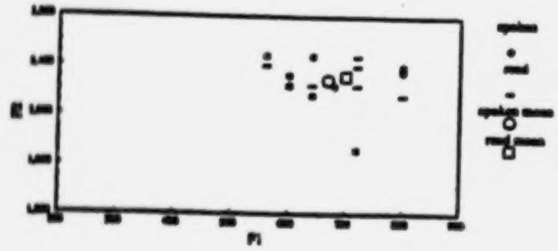
Figure 3d

# Sanders Family
## Vowel ae
## Spoken vs Read

Violetta, mother, 29, Mixed



Geraldine, daughter, 14, B



Debbie, daughter, 16, B

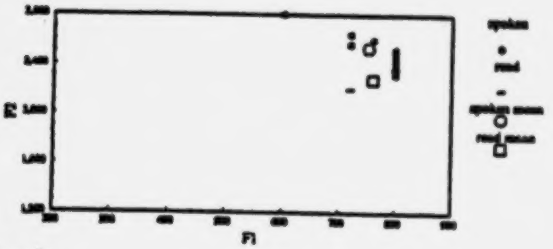
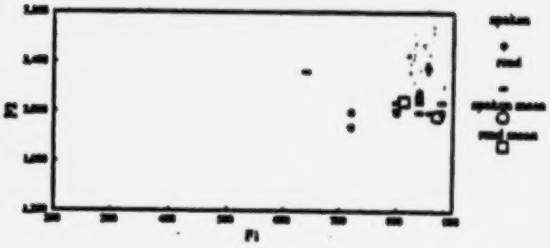


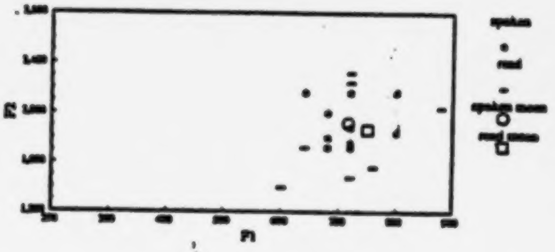
Figure 3e

# Shawn Family
## Vowel ae
## Spoken vs Read

Elizabeth, mother, 38, A



Monica, daughter, 13, Mixed



Marcia, daughter, 12, A

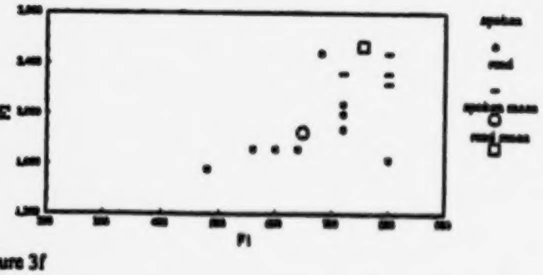


Figure 3f

in the read tokens which is not surprising as they are both B speakers. Both Violetta and Geraldine's read and spoken means are closesly aligned, indicating satisfaction with their non Detroit-like /ae/'s. The youngest, Debbie, however, has a read mean well below her spoken one. Thus, she does not conform to the general pattern for younger children being Northern-like. But perhaps her case is similar to that of Linda James, discussed earlier, who was pushed toward the Northern phonetic targets by conspiring forces. Debbie Sanders, too, may be pushed toward speaking a Southern dialect, partially by the influence of other children in her school which is 33% Black, as well as the fact that her family has a very low social index which may place her in a particular type of peer group; both of these conditions may conspire to make her a Southern speaker.

## [4] Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of dialect acquisition in an urban community with two adult dialect models available to Black children. Thus, although, all the children in the sample were native Detroiters each had differential exposure to the Southern adult variety spoken by recent immigrant parents. Two vowel variables were examined spectrographically in two speech styles with results indicating that the younger of the two children in each family group aspires toward the Northern variety while the older ones prefer to retain their perceived Southern identities even in the face of a local ambient dialect at sharp variance with such an identity. Now, to be sure, these results were not then used to test Detroit speakers' actual perceptions of these patterns of transmission, however, from a practical standoint this was not possible given that this study used twenty year old data. On the other hand, the kinds of phonetic variability found to exist in this speech community are probably 'below the level of conscious awareness' (Labov 1966/82:224) for these speakers. Even though these interviews lasted an hour or longer not a single speaker discussed any aspect of the Northern/Southern dialect continuum nor did they discuss pronunciation of any lexical items. Also the fact that two dialects are present in that community may simply not be consciously apparent to these non-linguist children who have never lived anywhere else. Thus, if the kind of phonetic variability described in this study does actually lead to sound change in the future, it will probably be what is termed 'change from below' (op.cit.:224) and as such presumably would not even be accessible to speakers or listeners' judgements in any case.

Since a social dialect is a configuration of phonetic, phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic features -- the phonetic patterns reported on in this study form only one aspect of the variation between speakers. However, it is clearly a very rich source of data about speakers allegiances and divergences with each other. Also since vowels are probably less conscious and carry most of the variation and change in the sound pattern of a language, such acoustic analyses could conceivably hint at the nature of speakers' basic underlying phonetic representations in the form of abstract target areas in the vowel space. That is, formant data allow one to specify the location of vowels in F1-F2 space and thus, allow one to observe the manner in which they cluster in a particular area in that space and so abstract from the shape and size of that clustering to the speaker's actual target realization of that phoneme.

What, then are the diachronic implications for this kind of synchronic variability? A useful way to think about these Detroit data in terms of sound change processes was discussed in a recent Trudgill book, Dialects in Contact. He and previous researchers such as Howard Giles have called it 'accommodation theory'. The theory attempts to explain why speakers modify their language in the presence of other speakers and listeners. Although Giles and others' analyses usually refer to short-term contacts, speculation about the long-term implications for these Detroit patterns might be useful. Trudgill implies that long-term permanent accommodation eventually leads to the acquisition of features from the target variety. He says that children probably have greater flexibility and therefore have a greater variety in their accommodation abilities. Most significantly Trudgill speculates that

> 'if a speaker accommodates frequently enough to a particular accent or dialect... then the accommodation may in time become permanent, particularly if attitudinal factors are favorable' (1986:39).

Perhaps these dialect patterns, due to accommodations between speakers of the Northern and Southern varieties might be the cause of sound change in the future. Trudgill coins the term "interdialect" (p.62) to refer to new forms created by the contact of the two dialects. Thus, it is possible that /ai/ will become intermediate between a monophthong and a diphthong, and that /ae/ will lost some of its 'Northern height' in future.. Since these Detroit data were collected over 20 years ago, perhaps someone should return to Detroit to check.

## Footnotes

[1] In fact, from 1910 to 1967 the Black population rose 100-fold from six thousand to 600 thousand of to 37% of the Detroit population as a whole.

[2] Except for the younger children who only read a few sentences so that only 2-3 tokens could be obtained from them.

[3] The usual low, back representative /a/ was not used because of suspected social class sensitive variability (Fasold, n.d.) as was the case for 'open o' / /, as well. Therefore, /^/ was chosen as the closest alternative vowel.

[4] As noted earlier, in order to demonstrate that raising is occurring it is necessary to show that both F1 and F2 have a specific quantifiable relationship to the non-raised variant: the former's value is decreased while the latter's is simultaneously increased.

[5] The latter would be the preferred interpretation because young teenage girls have been reported by Labov, Yaeger, Steiner (1972) to leading this change in /ae/'s realization in the Midwest.

## References

Deser, T (1988) 'Dialect Transmission and Variation: A Micro- Sociolinguistic Analysis of Six Black Families in Detroit'. Dissertation in Progress. Boston University.

Fasold, R. (n.d.) 'A Sociolinguistic Study of the Pronunciation of Three Vowels in Detroit Speech' Manuscript, Georgetown University.

Hockett, C. (1950) 'Age-grading and Linguistic Continuity' Language 26:449-57.

Labov, W. (1964/82) The Social Stratification of English in New York City Washington D.C. The Center for Applied Linguistics

Labov, W. (1972) Sociolinguistic Patterns Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Peterson, G. & H. Barney (1952) 'Control Methods Used in a Study of Vowels'. The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America 24(2):175-184.

Shuy, R., W. Wolfram & W. Riley (1968) Field Techniques in an Urban Language Study. Washington, D.C.:Center for Applied Linguistics.

Trudgill, P. (1986) Dialects in Contact. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Yaeger, M. (1975) 'Speaking Style: Some Phonetic Realizations and their Significance' Pennsylvania Working Papers on Linguistic Change and Variation Vol.I, no. 1. U.S. Regional Survey.

# LANGUAGE VARIATION THEORY IN THE LIGHT OF CO-OCCURRENCE RESTRICTION RULES

Hubert Devonish
(Dept. of Linguistics and Use of English, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica)

Two major techniques have been developed in the past two decades for analysing language variation. The first of these is the variable rule, associated with the work of Labov (1972a, 1972b). The second technique involves the use of implicational scaling. Both of these have been applied to the analysis of variation in Caribbean Creole situations. In fact, the use of implicational scaling for dealing with language variation may have been pioneered by DeCamp (1972) in his work on the Jamaican Creole-to-English continuum.

The continuum existing between conservative Guyanese Creole, on one hand, and Standard Guyanese English, on the other, has been at the centre of a lot of discussion on language variation. In this paper, therefore, the precise nature of the Creole-to-English continuum in Guyana will be re-examined with two aims in mind. The first of these is to critically assess the validity of orthodox variationist approaches when applied to language situations such as that existing in Guyana. The second aim is to produce the outline of an alternative approach which would not only work for situations similar to that in Guyana, but to a range of other language situations as well.

## Co-occurrence Rules in the Guyana Creole-to-English Continuum

Variation in the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum situation can be analysed using the concept of the linguistic variable. Each variable represents a particular function which can be performed within an utterance. The actual realization of this variable in a body of speech is in the form of one of the linguistic variants belonging to this variable. Thus, if we look at the first person subject pronoun variable, we find three variants. These variants, ai, a, and mi, can each operate in a sentence as a manifestation of the variable. The variant ai is associated with Guyanese English, the high status language within the speech community. On the other hand, mi is associated with conservative or basilectal Creole, the low status language variety. The variant a is mesolectal or intermediate between the two extremes, being associated with language varieties existing between the two poles.

Speakers operating within the Creole-to-English continuum in Guyana are not free to select any variant of a particular linguistic variable and combine it with just any variant of a co-existing linguistic variable. Each variant within a given variable is able to occur with only some of the variants of co-existing linguistic variables. The ability to co-occur with other such variants is restricted. This is due to the operation

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 129-139
© the author

of co-occurrence rules.

The clause is the unit within which co-occurrence rules operate on the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum. Thus, a variant selected for use within one linguistic variable will restrict what variant can be selected for use within a variable co-occurring within the same clause. In Devonish (1978), an extensive examination was made of co-occurrence rules in the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum. It was found that no such rules operate outside the clause. A speaker is, therefore, able to make a selection of variant within a linguistic variable, free of influence from any variant which may co-occur with it outside of the boundary of the clause.

Speakers in this speech community have their choice of variant for each variable within the clause constrained by linguistic factors in the form of co-occurrence restriction rules. Social factors which determine choice of language variety, e.g. level of formality, topic, attitude of speaker to listener, etc., are only able to operate freely between one clause and the next. What is being proposed here is that speakers are able, based on the social factors operating when the clause is about to be produced, to select for use a particular variety from within their repertoires. Co-occurrence restriction rules then determine the internal structure of the language variety selected for use in that clause.

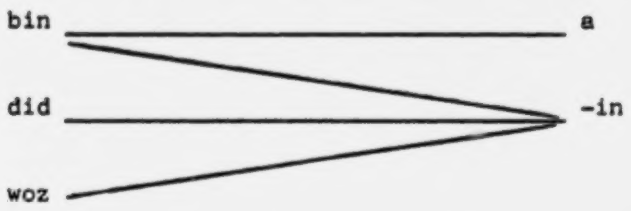
Let us examine how co-occurrence rules operate by looking at the case of some actual linguistic variables on the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum. The past tense marker variable is made up of the variants bin, did and woz. Another variable is the continuative aspect variable made up of a, occurring before the verb, and -in, occurring after the verb, as variants. Below are sentences in which these two variables are present.

1) (a) di maan bin a taak 'The man was talking'
(b) di maan bin taakin "
(c) di maan did taakin "
(d) di maan woz taakin "
BUT
(e) *di maan did a taak
(f) *di maan woz a taak

In the sentences above, we notice that certain combinations of variants from these two variables are not permitted. What do we mean, however, by 'not permitted'? This is used to mean that (i) these combinations do not occur in very extensive bodies of speech spanning a wide range of speakers in the community and (ii) they are rejected as unacceptable by members of the speech community. We will have more to say on this later.

In the examples in (1), there is a total of six theoretically possible combinations of the variants of the two variables. Two are blocked from occurring as a result of co-occurrence restriction rules. The rule blocking the two starred combinations is shared by the entire language community, regardless of the variant(s) particular speakers may be in the habit of selecting. The co-occurrence rules involving the two variables may be represented as in the diagram below.

2) The Past Tense Variable The Continuative Aspect Variable



The combination of variants of the two variables produces four different language varieties. This conclusion is based on a very specific definition of the term 'language variety' as it can be applied to the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum situation. According to this definition, a language variety consists of a set of variants, one from each linguistic variable existing in the speech community. The variants of variables which are in syntagmatic relationship to each other consitute a network of mutually co-occurring variants within the clause. In the case of those variables in paradigmatic relationship to each other, a variant belonging to a particular language variety will have the same powers of co-occurrence as the selected variant of another variable within the same paradigm. This, it should be noted, represents an acceptable definition of a language variety even within a speech community where the language varieties are discrete.

What marks off a continuum situation from that involving discrete language varieties is the existence of shared or overlapping variants across the various language varieties. Thus, in the case of the variables just used as examples, a occurs in one language variety, i.e. that involving the combination bin + a. The variant -in, on the other hand, appears in three language varieties, those involving bin + -in, did + in, and woz + -in. The relative ability of variants to straddle more than one language variety produces the effect of a gradual shading off of one language variety into another as one moves from one pole on the continuum towards the other.

In presenting this model of the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum, it is useful to be able to explain how such a continuum could have developed historically. The answer to this lies in the differences in function and social prestige which came to be associated with English and Creole in the early contact situation. Speakers of two language varieties which have quite distinct kinds of function and social prestige linked to them, form certain stereotypes about what constitute the linguistic differences between these two language varieties. These stereotypes serve the ideological function of providing members of the speech community with a justification for the difference in status and functions of the two languages. Thus, a particular language is viewed as owing its status and functions to the fact that it either has or does not have a particular stereotyped linguistic feature.

Let us examine this linguistic stereotyping as it would have occurred in a language situation involving initial contact between English and conservative Guyanese Creole. Each variant of a linguistic variable would have become associated with particular social values. The English variant of a variable would have acquired the high status and prestige functions associated with the language behaviour of the dominant group within the society. The Creole variant, on the other hand, would have become linked socially with the low status and lack of prestige of the dominated group(s). However, the relative importance of linguistic variables as vehicles for signalling social information would have varied considerably from one variable to another. Every speech community in which there are language varieties in contact with each other, has its shibboleths. These are linguistic variables which function as symbols of the variation within all the other variables in the speech community.

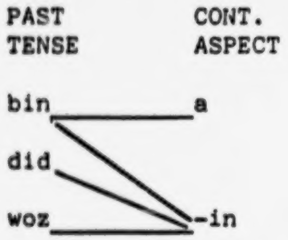
In the early contact situation between Creole and English in Guyana, some linguistic variables would have emerged as being strongly socially diagnostic. Others would have been moderately so, and many barely regarded as socially diagnostic at all. In variables which were strongly socially diagnostic, English variants would have started to occur in clauses otherwise entirely consisting of Creole variants. English variants of variables which were moderately socially diagnostic would have had a much more restricted ability to co-occur with Creole variants. Those English variants of variables which were minimally socially diagnostic would have been largely restricted to co-occurring with other English variants. This could also be viewed from the perspective of the Creole variants. Those variants from diagnostically weak variables could co-occur with a wide range of English variants. Those Creole variants in diagnostically stronger variables would have been progressively less and less able to co-occur with English variants, as one moved towards the strongest variables. This is the stuff of which co-occurrence rules were made. It was out of all this that the continuum developed.

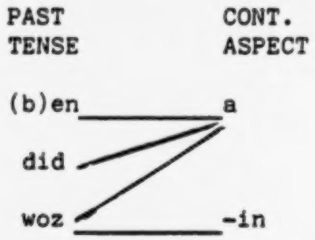
The emergence of co-occurrence restriction rules was the result of social rather than linguistic factors. This is the position taken in the attempt at historical reconstruction just presented. Evidence to support this position can be found in a comparison of the Creole-to-English continua of Jamaica and Guyana. At the conservative Creole level, the two situations share very similar morpho-syntactic features. At the English pole on the continuum, the two situations again share nearly identical morpho-syntactic features. If, therefore, the co-occurrence rules in the Guyana continuum were motivated by linguistic factors, one would expect very similar co-occurrence rules to operate in Jamaica. This would have the effect of producing extremely similar intermediate language varieties along the continuum in both situations.

In the Jamaica Creole-to-English continuum, the past tense marker variable is made up of the variants (b)en, did, and woz. The continuative aspect variable consists of the variants a and -in. Below is a comparison of the co-occurrence possibilities involving the variants of these two variables in the Creole-to-English continua of Guyana and Jamaica. The co-occurrence data for Jamaica was derived from Bailey (1966) in which an attempt was made to give an exhaustive listing of the combinations possible in that speech community.

3)

| | Guyana | Jamaica |
|---|---|---|
| (a) | di maan bin a taak | di man (b)en a taak |
| (b) | di maan bin taakin | *di man (b)en taakin |
| (c) | *di maan did a taak | di man did a taak |
| (d) | di maan did taakin | *di man did taakin |
| (e) | *di maan woz a taak | di man woz a taak |
| (f) | di maan woz taakin | di man woz taakin |





An examination of the above comparison between the Guyana and Jamaica Creole-to-English continua shows a close correspondence between them at the most Creole level, as represented by the examples in (3)a. There is a similar correspondence at the most English level as seen in the examples in (3)f. However, at the intermediate levels, as represented by the examples in (3)b-e, there is a complete lack of correspondence. What could have caused this, in view of the fact that the two polar varieties out of which these intermediate varieties developed are almost identical in the two situations? The answer lies in our proposition about differences in the relative strength of socially diagnostic linguistic variables. In Guyana, the past tense variable developed as a relatively weak socially diagnostic variable. The result has been that the Creole variant bin is not only able to co-occur with the Creole continuative aspect marker variant, a, but also with the more English variant, -in. In the Jamaican case, the past tense is much stronger as a socially diagnostic variable. The result is that the Creole variant, (b)en, is restricted to co-occurring only with the most Creole continuative aspect marker variant, a. The more English-influenced past tense variants, did and woz, are the only past tense variants able to co-occur with the English-influenced continuative aspect variant, -in. In the case of the continuative aspect variable, the Guyana continuum treats this as a strong variable. Thus, the English-influenced variant, -in, is able to co-occur with even the most Creole past tense variant, bin. In the Jamaican case, however, the continuative aspect variable is relatively weak. The most English variant, -in, is not able to occur with the Creole past tense variant, (b)en. The weakness of this variable in Jamaica also expresses itself in the fact that the Creole continuative aspect variant, a, is able to co-occur with even the most English-influenced past tense variant, woz. The differences between the intermediate varieties on the Jamaica and Guyana Creole-to-English continua, are clearly not linguistic in origin. In the two speech communities, the relative strength of the two socially diagnostic linguistic variables is different. In Guyana, the continuative aspect variable is stronger. In Jamaica, the past tense variable is stronger.

## A Re-examination of Language Variation Theory

Two of the most common tools currently employed in the study of language variation are implicational scales and the variable rule. Let us focus on the first of these. Implicational scales were first employed to deal with variation in the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum by Bickerton (1971, 1973, 1975). In a refined form, these scales have been applied to the Guyana situation more recently by Rickford (1979, 1987a).

Implicational scales are employed to do two things. Firstly, they are used in order to establish the nature of the relationship between variants within the speech of individuals in the speech community. They supposedly show how the presence of a particular variant in a certain linguistic environment will predict its appearance in a specific set of other environments within the speech of the same individual. Let us suppose that the environments in which a particular variable can occur range from I to VII. The presence of variant X in environment IV will predict its presence in environments V, VI and VII, but not in I, II and III. Let us now look at the behaviour of variant Y, the other variant of the same variable. The presence of variant Y in environment III will predict its occurrence in environments I, and II, but not in IV, V, VI and VII. It is this which Bickerton (1973:647) was able to demonstrate in his analysis of the distribution of the variants fu and tu in the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum.

In the light of our approach, what does it signify to be able to rank on an implicational scale speakers' use of variants of a variable? It simply exposes the existence of co-occurrence rules involving the use of a particular variant in its various possible environments. Thus, whenever variant X appears in environment IV, any occurrences of the same variable in environments V, VI and VII will have to be in the form of variant X also. Similarly, any occurrence of variant Y in environment III will mean that any appearance of the variable to which this variant belongs in environments I and II, will have to involve variant Y. The one problem presented by all this, however, is that Bickerton was able to rank not individual clauses uttered by speakers but entire bodies of speech produced by individual speakers. The fact that this was possible suggests that there was very little code switching within the speech of the informants. Thus, the co-occurrence rules which are essentially a feature of the clause became extended to the level of an entire discourse, predominantly one variety having been employed. Bickerton collected his language data from informants by means of interviews. It is being suggested here that the interview situation is one which lends itself to much less code switching than the speaker is capable of.

The other use to which implicational scales can be put is to rank variants belonging to a series of different variables. We can take the case of the variants of the personal pronoun variables analysed by Bickerton (1973). From the scale presented in Bickerton (1973:661), the presence of a Creole variant of a particular variable in the speech of an informant predicts the presence also of a Creole variant in certain variables, but not in others. Complementing this, the presence of a more English variant of a variable will predict the presence of English variants in precisely those variables where the use of Creole variants make no prediction. This is consistent with an interpretation that what is being demonstrated here are co-occurrence rules within the clause. The fact that the ranking is possible for an entire body of discourse produced by a particular speaker may be the result of an absence of code switching within the interview. The artificial and unchanging nature of the social relationship in an interview situation may well account for this.

Rickford (1979:380) presents an analysis of the speech of a number of Guyanese informants in a community. He focusses on the same variables as Bickerton and comes up with rather similar results. One area in which Rickford's data is superior to that of Bickerton is that it probably includes much more natural and spontaneous language use. The reason for this is that one of the situations in which each informant is recorded by Rickford is peer group interaction. This may explain two features which serve to distinguish Rickford's results. The implicational scale presented by Bickerton (1973:661) has relatively few cases of slots occupied by a Creole and more English variant simultaneously. Bickerton regards these cases as evidence of 'rule conflict', involving a speaker in the process of acquiring a more English variant in an environment where he/she previously only used the Creole variant.

Rickford's scale shows many more cases of environments in which speakers used more than one variant. In commenting on this difference in results, Bickerton (p.c. in Rickford, 1987b:136) states that in his own work, he used for each speaker only a single 'speech act' and that if a speaker produced more than one 'speech act', he was treated as if he were two speakers. He concludes that if he had included a broad range of 'speech styles' from each speaker, he would have ended up with scales substantially identical to those in Rickford (1979). This is a conclusion with which Rickford (1987b:136) strongly agrees. They are both implicitly agreeing that, where there is variation between two variants of a variable in the speech of an informant, this represents the use of two language varieties by that speaker. The reason why, in spite of of the presence of this code switching, it is still possible to implicationally scale the output of speakers in Guyana is not answered by either Rickford or Bickerton.

The explanation which I would propose is that, for the most part, speakers switch to immediately adjacent varieties on the continuum. The appearance of two variants of the same variable in the speech of most speakers represents switching between two or more immediately adjacent varieties. The manner of presentation of implicational scales by both Bickerton and Rickford simply squash together these very similar varieties by showing both variants occurring in a single language variety. The similarity between the varieties squashed together means that they would have occupied adjacent positions on the scale anyway. The result is that this squashing together does not disturb the ability of the analyst to rank them implicationally in relation to the other varieties above and below on that scale.

Rickford (1987a) supplements his data by administering to his informants two Correction Tests, one Creole-to-English, the other English-to-Creole. The intention is to elicit variants which speakers may know but not have produced while they were being recorded. When the results of these tests were added to the data produced in spontaneous recordings, some interesting observations were made. These involved the variables which were composed of three variants, a basilectal or conservative Creole variant, a mesolectal or intermediate one, and an acrolectal or English variant. His Estate Class informants, speakers who worked as field labourers on the sugar estate, tended to use or at least know the basilectal and mesolectal variants, but not the acrolectal ones.. His Non-Estate Class, speakers with higher status jobs usually unconnected with the sugar estate, used or knew mesolectal and acrolectal variants but were ignorant of the basilectal ones. (Rickford, 1987a:163,:166) What this suggests is that the vast majority of speakers in Rickford's sample, and by extension Bickerton's sample also, tended to use varieties contiguous to each other on the continuum. Squashing these contiguous varieties together by regarding variation between two variants of the same variable in the speech of a speaker as a rule conflict rather than as a code switch, therefore, has no effect on the ability of the material to be implicationally scaled. The data can still be scaled. That is except when one is dealing with a speaker capable of switching to a non-contiguous variety.

What then about those informants who switch between non-contiguous varieties on the continuum? These are, according to the approach being proposed here, accounted for by the deviances in the implicational scales of both Bickerton (1973) and Rickford (1979). In both these cases, the deviances account for approximately 12% of the occurrences in the data. The agreement between the findings of Bickerton and Rickford suggest that switches to non-contiguous varieties on the continuum are uniformly infrequent within the speech community. In addition, particularly in the case of the Rickford data, the deviances are not spread evenly among speakers. Rather, the majority of deviances occur in the speech of informants who have at least one other deviance. This suggests that this kind switching is a feature of the linguistic behaviour of only certain special speakers, i.e. those who have a wider linguistic repertoire than that of the majority of speakers.

If we look at the speaker who accounts for the largest number of deviances in Rickford's data, we make some interesting observations. This speaker, Ustad, was one of the rare cases of a sugar-estate worker who had climbed the job hierarchy, moving from boy-gang worker to field foreman. On retirement, he maintained his links with the ordinary members of the community whilst serving as a religious and community leader and representative in contacts with important people from outside. Ustad's breadth of social activities would suggest an equal breadth in his control of varieties along the continuum. This is in fact the case as is shown by the fact that Ustad is the only speaker of Rickford's 24 informants who used all the 21 possible variants of the 9 personal pronoun variables which were investigated. (Rickford, 1987c:196-199) I would argue that Ustad was the informant most capable of using non-contiguous varieties along the continuum and that, in doing so, his behaviour on 5 of the 9 variables cannot be implicationally scaled. It is being suggested that all of the cases of deviances in Bickerton's and Rickford's data actually represent switches to non-contiguous varieties along the continuum on the part of the speakers who produce them.

Another kind of approach which has been employed to deal with variation in the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum is a quantitative one. This owes its origins to the notion of the variable rule as originally developed by Labov (1972a, 1972b) Within this tradition, Rickford (1987c:73) presents figures which state that 12 informants who are members of the Estate Class have a relative frequency of .89 in their use of the variant mi of the first person singular pronoun variable. This is as compared with a relative frequency of .11 amongst the 12

Non-Estate informants. What does all this signify? If, as is being argued in this paper, code choice can occur freely outside the boundary of a clause, this frequency difference between the two groups of informants could not reflect a difference in the language varieties which they use. Both groups use the Creole variant mi as well as the non-Creole variant. The difference is one of frequency. Both groups, therefore, use varieties along the continuum which employ the variant mi. They both also use varieties possessing the non-Creole variant of the variable. What is different about the two groups is the frequency with which they use the various language varieties along the continuum.

Even though Rickford (1987c) does not make that mistake with reference to Guyana, quantitative approaches tend to be used to make statements about the linguistic competence of speakers. The very term 'variable rule' suggests that it reflects some aspect of speakers' knowledge of their language. An approach such as that taken in this paper would lead in quite a different direction. What is different about members of these two groups of speakers, assuming that they were all interviewed in roughly comparable social situations, is the social values attached to particular language varieties. A member of the Non-Estate group would tend to use more English-influenced varieties for the kind of social situation prevailing during the greater part of the interview. For those parts of the interaction where they would want to signal an unusual degree of informality or familiarity, they would switch to a more Creole-influenced variety employing the variant mi. In the case of the Estate group, the converse is true. For them, varieties with mi are appropriate for the social conditions prevailing over the greater part of the interview. When they wish to signal some extra degree of formality, they switch to a variety employiong one of the non-Creole variants of the variable.

The question which needs to be asked is whether co-occurrence rules in conditions of language variation are restricted to Creole continuum situations such as that of Guyana. A more general question is whether there are any situations where there are linguistic variables with variants which are free to occur without reference to the choice made in co-occurring variables within a unit such as a clause or sentence. If such situations exist, then quantitative methods which focus on frequency of use may reflect the linguistic competence of speakers. In relation to the implicational ranking of variants, this is not likely to be possible in circumstances where there are no co-occurrence rules at work. The issue raised by a re-examination of the variationist approaches to the Guyana Creole-to-English continuum is whether, by ignoring the question of co-occurrence rules, variationists have not been missing the very point on which they should have been focussing. Should their focus not be the identification of internally consistent language varieties to which certain social values are attached by the speech community? The fact that the varieties thus identified may be extremely similar to other varieties with which they co-exist simply indicates that variants of particular variables function in more than one language variety.

## REFERENCES

Bickerton, D. (1971) 'Inherent variability and variable rules', Foundations of Language 7: 457-92

Bickerton, D. (1973) 'The nature of a Creole continuum', Language 49: 640-69.

DeCamp, D. (1971) 'Toward a generative analysis of a post-creole speech continuum', Hymes, D. ed. (1971), Pidginization and Creolization of Languages Cambridge, CUP, 349-370.

Devonish, H. (1978) 'The Selection and Codification of a Widely Understood and Publicly Useable Language Variety in Guyana...', Unpublished DPhil. dissertation University of York.

Labov, W. (1972a) Language in the Inner City London Basil Blackwell.

Labov, W. (1972b) Sociolinguistic Patterns Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press.

Rickford, J. (1979) Variation in a Creole Continuum: Quantitative and Implicational Approaches PhD dissertation University of Pennsylvania.

Rickford, J. (1987a) 'The haves and have nots: Sociolinguistic surveys and the assessment of speaker competence' Language in Society 16:149-178.

Rickford, J. (1987b) 'Decreolization paths for Guyanese singular pronouns' Gilbert. G. (1987) ed. Pidgin and Creole Languages Honolulu University of Hawaii Press.

Rickford, J. (1987c) Dimensions of a Creole Continuum: History, Texts and Linguistic Analysis of Guyanese Creole Stanford Stanford University Press.

# REALTIME VS. APPARENT TIME CHANGE IN MONTREAL FRENCH*

Malcah Yaeger-Dror

[Université de Montréal,
Center for Applied Linguistics,
Ben Gurion University ]

**ABSTRACT:** Sociolinguists (most recently Labov 1982 and Trudgill 1986) have assumed that dialect is stabilised by adolescence. Recently Montreal French (MF) data has been collected by a group of researchers headed by Pierrette Thibault and David Sankoff which permits the comparison of the speech of individual speakers in 1971 and 1984. The comparison of these data seriously challenges Labov's and Trudgill's theories. Perhaps Giles' Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT), and recent work by Thibault(1983), help explain how such disproof of the generally accepted theories can arise.

**INTRODUCTION:** Both **chain shifting** and **lexical diffusion** are relevant to the analysis of **sound** change in the present corpus. These three aspects of the study of change in the MF vowel system are clearly interrelated. Each speaker's vowels were analysed within this perspective.

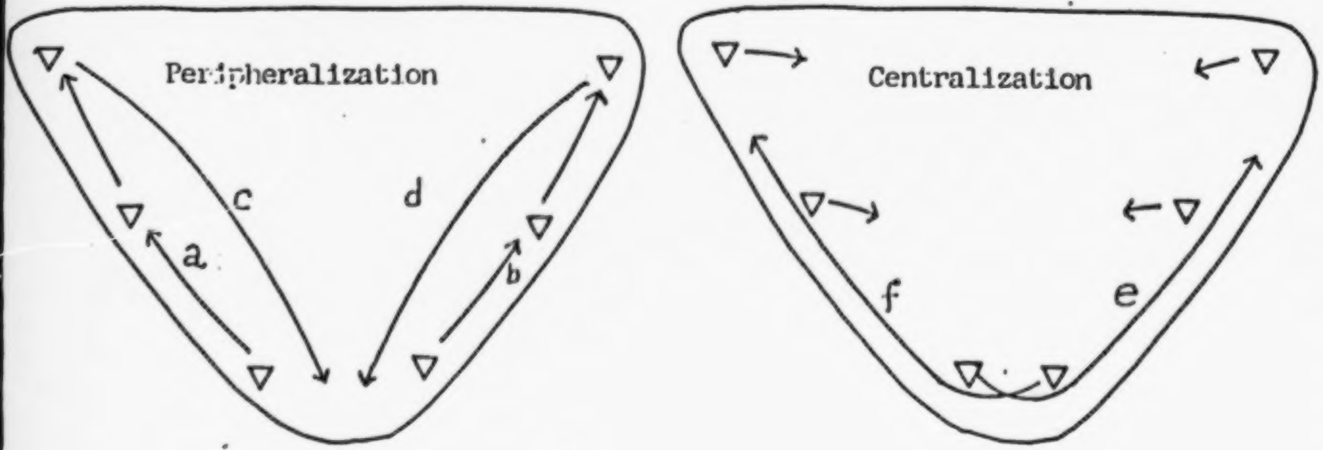
1. CHAIN SHIFTING: The presently accepted theory of vowel shifting (Labov, Yaeger & Steiner 1972) is that longer vowels will be more peripheral, and that --if and when they shift-- they will shift upward -- as in Figure 1 --, while shorter vowels will be less peripheral and fall or 'collapse' inward -- as in Figure 1'. -- While a theoretical discussion of chain shifting is not the central concern here, it is critical to remember that contrary to expectations based on earlier studies, the **OLDER speakers** have the more **raised** vowels shown on Figure 2, while the **YOUNGER speakers** have the more **open** vowels shown on Figure 3. The nuclei of (phonologically) mid-low vowels advance from the older mid-high position shown in Figure 2 to the newer **lower** position shown on Figure 3. This neogrammatical change is not a conscious change. [1] To take one example from Table I, the older pronunciation of père. 'father', would be [pei̯r], the newer pronunciation [pai̯R] (which can be corrected to [pa:R]).

2. LEXICAL CLASSES and LEXICAL DIFFUSION: The second aspect of change which must be considered for the present study is the comparison of lexicalist and neogrammarian components of sound changes found in these data, and determining which theory is more appropriate for given aspects of the linguistic system being analysed. The chain shifting of vowels within a linguistic system is generally assumed to be a neogrammatical change (Labov 1981). That is, presumably the change occurs in the phonological component of the grammar, and applies to all words simultaneously. Labov showed that even the most regular **neogrammatical** vowel shifts appear to have a strong **lexical** component. In some cases a **lexical residue of** historical/etymological classes remains, which does not necessarily inhibit the general neogrammarian theory of chain shifting. In other cases, the lexical classes arose because all the vowels in an older class did not shift simultaneously, but left classes which we will refer to as **lexical exceptions**.

In the data to be discussed today, both types of lexical classes occur: Table 1 gives examples of what we call **residual** lexical classes which are found in the data, and

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 141-153
© the author

Figure 1. Patterns of chain shifting, from Labov,Yaeger & Steiner

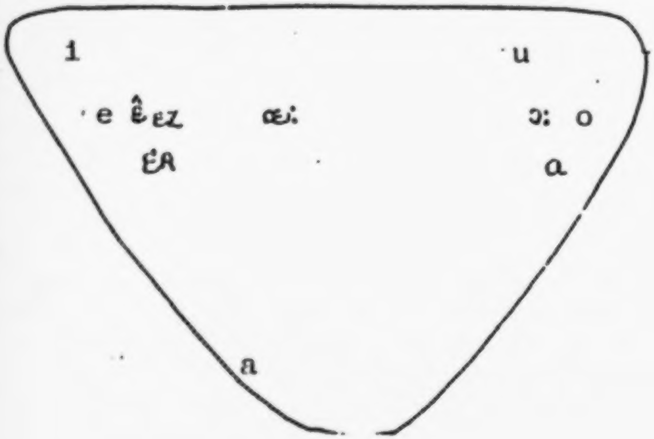


Pattern 1

Pattern 1'

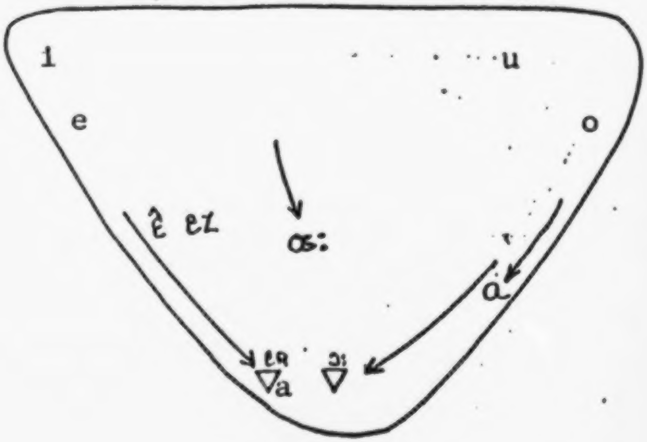
Peripheralization
a
b
c
d
Centralization
e
f

Figure 2. Conservative QF Pattern



i
u
e ɛ̂ ɛɪ
œː
ɔː o
ɛə
ɑ
a

Figure 3. Innovative QF Pattern



i
u
e
o
ɛ̂ ɛɪ
œː
ɑ
ɛə
ɔː
a

compares them with what we regard as the 'main' class, for present purposes. It also gives you the code for the classes which will be found on the figures of vowel charts which will follow. Table 2 gives examples of **exceptional** lexical classes with their codes. Table 3 shows minimal pairs of vowels which would belong to the same class if lexical diffusion of the 'exceptional' classes had not taken place. The first group of lexical exceptions on Table 3 is conservative. That is, they retain an older, raised, pronunciation longer. In contrast the vowel position for *alors* is advanced ahead of its class: It lowers toward the new position portrayed on Figure 3 before other vowels in the same phonological 'class'.

Can we compare residual lexical classes with exceptional lexical classes? Quantitative methods reveal that the **residual** lexical classes from Table 1, which were presumed to be merged into a general class of mid-low long vowels (ɛ:,ɔ:,œ:), have not merged. The larger lexical classes remain distinct for vernacular speakers from all age groups. However, the lexical subgroups which lengthened last (shown on Table 1 as 'VR') include the most **exceptions** (which do not shift with the rest of their class), but these exceptions are being 'regularized' among the younger speakers. -- *Bête-pâte* ('V') does not merge with the *paire-part* class ('VR') even after two centuries of apparent merger, while lexical diffusion of *père-mère* ('ERF') or *encore* ('ENC') is being resolved among younger speakers -- some of whom maintained a clear difference between these exceptions and their 'main' classes thirteen years ago. And here we return to the main point of this paper -- which is to show that both neogrammarian and lexical aspects of sound change are **advancing** in real time as well as apparent time for at least some **speakers**.

3. SOUND CHANGE IN REAL AND APPARENT TIME: A comparison of the vowel systems of individual speakers in 1971 and 1984, will show that some speakers have considerably altered their vowel systems. Given that this expressly contradicts an assumption of recent sociolinguistic analysis, it will form the main point of the present **paper**.

**THE THEORY OF DIALECT FIXING:**Labov(1966) demonstrated quite clearly that sound change can be analysed by comparing the rotation of vowels in the speech of older and younger speakers from the same community. Since it is so clear that this change in apparent time occurs and is measurable, it was inferred that speakers within a given community must no longer be able to change their dialect after a certain point, otherwise older speakers might adapt so radically to newer forms that even fine phonetic analysis could not determine changes across different age groups.

By Labov, et al (1968) it appeared, from the speech of the children and teenagers analysed for that study, that data from preadolescents revealed no obvious evidence of style shifting, while adolescent and older speakers could style shift, but appeared to have a 'fixed dialect' of their own.

Chambers and Trudgill (1980) pointed out that while the **'change in apparent time'** which Labov had been studying could be determined from the comparison of the interviews of older and younger speakers, it was not thereby proven that this degree of change accurately reflected the actual change, which they referred to as **'change in real time'**. While they did not produce evidence either to destroy or uphold the theory that change in apparent time accurately reflects change in real time, they made clear that evidence should be gathered to either support or modify the theory.

**TABLE 1.** Lexical residue: Examples of the historical vowel classes of French to be discussed. (The *meat/mate* distinction in Belfast English is also a residual lexical class.) On the figures, each class will be represented by its code.

| # change (code) | CLASS | Exs: (ɑ :) | (e :) | (ø:/œ:) | (o:/ɔ :) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 VSK>VK(V) | 'bête-pâte' | pâte | bête | jeûne | apôtre |
| 1'Vz>V:z (VZ) | 'pèse-base' | base | pèse | vendeuse | rose |
| 2Vss>V:s (VS) | 'baisse-passe' | passe | baisse | -- | bosse |
| (3)Vr>V:r(VR) | 'paire-part' | part | paire | peur | port |

**TABLE 2.** Lexical exceptions from diffusion: Examples of different groups of lexical exceptions to be discussed. (Exceptions to (æh) raising -- like *am,can* in New York, or *ran,swam,began* in Philadelphia pose a similar complication of a negrammatical rule.) On the figures, each class will be represented by its code.

| # Class (code) | Pseudo-class | Examples | Gloss |
|---|---|---|---|
| (3)'paire-part'(F) | family/church | père, mère | 'father,mother' |
| (ENC) | 'encore' | encore | 'again, later' |
|  | 'mort' | mort | 'dead' |
| (G) | 'weak word(s)' | leur | 'their' |
| (AL) | 'alors' | alors | 'thus,therefore' |

**Table 3.** Minimal pairs formed by regular and diffused members of the *paire-part* class. On the figures, each class will be represented by its code.

| Regular Class |  |  | Lexical Exceptions |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Word | gloss | [transc] | Word | gloss | [transc] | (code) |
| paire | pair | pɛ :r | père | father | pe:r | (F) |
| maire | mayor | mɛ :r | mère | mother | me:r |  |
| mer | sea | mɛ : r |  |  |  |  |
| mords | bite | mɔ :r | mort | dead | mo:r | (ENC) |
| leur | theirs | lœ:r | leur | their | liør | (G) |
| ors | but | ɔ :r | alors | therefore | alʊ :r | (AL) |

Both Labov and Trudgill have subsequently come to the conclusion that dialect is 'fixed' -- or to use Fromkin's phrase (1987) 'hard wired' into the brain -- by adolescence, or perhaps even by the age of 8.[2] The evidence which they have presented in support of this conclusion is the following: Both Payne (1980) and Trudgill (1986) found that only speakers who enter a new dialect area before that age and have extensive network ties outside their immediate family can 'learn' the elaborate lexical classes which occur in the Philadelphia and Norwich dialects (respectively). In fact, Trudgill found that even speakers born in Norwich might not pick up the lexically distinct (ow) classes if their mother is not native to the area.[3] Given the perspective provided by our understanding of lexical classes, we can even add that while the lexical classes which cannot be learned in Norwich are true, historically **residual lexical classes** like those found on **Table 1**, the lexical classes which are not learned by new-Philadelphians are **lexical exceptions** like those found on Table 2. In short, according to these studies, we should assume that both types of lexical classes **cannot** continue to change past adolescence. Since phonological change is presumed to be 'wired' in by adolescence, while word-by-word lexical change can continue throughout a speaker's life (Labov 1982) we can assume that if **lexical** change is arrested, then it is even more obvious that **neogrammatical** changes cannot continue past adolescence. There is, of course, one possible weakness to this argument: Even granted that adolescent immigrants to an area can no longer learn the new dialect's pattern, does that prove that natives to an area cannot continue to advance changes in their own dialect as they get older?

**THEORY FOR DIALECT CHANGE PAST ADOLESCENCE:** While, as we see, two major theoreticians of language change have accepted a biological understanding of language learning which entails that language cannot change for a given individual after a certain age, two lines of theoretical reasoning would lead us to a contrary conclusion.-- Both social psychologists (Giles 1984) and anthropologists (Thibault 1983) maintain theoretical positions which might entail that dialects are **not** fixed by adolescence. Their positions differ in detail, but can be combined for present purposes.

Giles, and other social psychologists, have done work which highlights the social needs which influence speech. They claim that speakers have social psychological needs which prompt them to accommodate their speech toward that of other speakers with whom they interact. The theory does not require that actual change in the dialect occurs: The travel agents' data studied by Coupland (1980,1984) and Hindle (1980), for example, revealed extensive style variation rather than dialect change.

In the late seventies David Sankoff proposed that speakers' needs for the **'legitimated language'**[4] in their workplace influences their dialect choice (Sankoff & Laberge 1978). For example, someone very rich who runs a contracting firm will have much less need for the legitimated language than (say) a switchboard operator or a sales-person in one of the fancier department stores from Labov (1972)'s department store survey. Thibault proposes further that speakers' needs for adapting their speech are very different when they are members of the youth culture from when they have to make a living. According to her theory, they may actually change their vernacular considerably while in the workforce. Her proposal is consistent with SAT, but claims that **dialect change** can take place. If Thibault is right, social dialect (theoretically) should not be 'set' until speakers have spent some considerable time in the work force.

Of course all this theorizing is irrelevant if speakers' phonology is biologically 'fixed' by adolescence. On the other hand, if, as Thibault pointed out, speech is important to the wage-earner in a very different way from its importance within the youth culture, it would be surprising if these clear needs were not meetable, because (deplorably) speakers' dialects are 'wired in' or 'fixed' before they have left the youth culture! Since the world of linguistic symbols is so powerful, we must at least check for the possibility of the continuation of dialect development into the ages when speakers decide for themselves what they wish their lives to be. Has there been any data-based evidence which supports Thibault's claim?

In fact, until recently there was no empirical data which recognised that such marketplace style shifting could influence core dialect phonology. However, if we return to Payne's (1980) study on which the 'discovery' of what we can refer to as the 'hard-wiring' theory was based, we find that even for immigrants to an area, dialect changes which are more neogrammarian in character can be learned at later ages. Shockey (1984) also found that a fine analysis of the speech of four US immigrants to England reveals a strong shift toward the British English norm even when talking to other Americans.

Since everyone agrees that word-by-word, or lexical, change can continue after adolescence, we should not be surprised to find data which demonstrate such change: In fact, the critical difference between Labov (1982) and Trudgill's (1986) recent positions and Thibault's (1983) lies in the acceptance or rejection of the possibility that **phonological** change can continue after adolescence. However, it is impossible to understand the sound changes which have taken place without clarifying how data was gathered to carry out the study.

**THE DATA BASE:** In order to attempt any analysis of sound change in real time one must have not only a data base with sufficiently rich choice of speakers to provide a cross section of the community, but one for which there are speech samples of the same speakers at two different times. The Montreal French corpus is already quite well known within the sociolinguistic community. In 1971, sociolinguistic interviews of Montreal French speakers from all walks of life were carried out (Sankoff, et al. 1973). In 1984, half of the original speakers were reinterviewed. One of the primary goals of the new project (Thibault & Vincent 1987) was to determine to what degree an individual's speech patterns had changed between these two interviews. With that in mind, the interviewers were trained to use a style as similar as possible to the style used in 1971.[5]

Auditory analysis of a subset of the 1971-1984 corpus has revealed a discrepancy between change in apparent time and change in real time. The acoustic analysis to be reported here confirms that some Montreal speakers have changed their speech patterns significantly between 1971 and 1984.

**Acoustical Analysis:** The vowels on Figures 4-7 include all mid-low vowels,and low vowels, and two stable vowels which will provide a base for normalization -- [o:] (as in the word for 'word',mot[mo:]) and [i:] (as in the word for 'put',mis[mi:]). These are the independent variables. Tokens of the **residual** classes (from Table 1) and the **exceptional** lexical classes (found on Tables 2 and 3) were analysed separately, and will be represented on the Figures which follow. The tables provide the codes for those classes presented here.[6]

**Choice of speakers:** Table 4 presents relevant background information for speakers whose vowel charts are presented below. Speakers to be used for the study were chosen for the following characteristics in order to maximize the chance that **significant** changes will be measurable:

**--Age:** Following the theory proposed by Thibault, speakers who were already in the work force when first interviewed in 1971 (those born, say, before 1950), but who had not yet left it (born after 1910), could be studied. Speakers to be analysed were chosen from the two extreme age poles possible within this framework. Thus, speakers born between 1910 and 1920 were contrasted with those born between 1944 and 1950.

**--'Class':** Following the theory of socio-linguistic marketplace proposed by Sankoff and Laberge (1978), both speakers characterised as having a great need for the 'legitimated' language variety in their life in 1971 -- who have a high linguistic marketplace (or 'ML') index -- and speakers characterised as having less need for the legitimated language variety were analysed. These two groups are (very roughly) equivalent to designations according to classes of 'upper middle class', and 'working class', respectively.

**--Gender:** Earlier impressionistic analysis showed that the vowel shift being analysed follows the same S-curve pattern as many other changes which have been studied in North America: That is, in the analysis of the 1971 corpus, older women with low ML index had already carried the vowel change to completion (as shown schematically on Figure 3) along with most younger speakers, but men with lower ML tended to be most conservative, so that even some of the younger men with low index ratings still maintained a vowel pattern similar to the one found on Figure 2. Given that men are most conservative in 1971, it is possible that they are more likely to continue to advance this chain shift after 1971. The speech of men from the two 'ML' and age groups isolated have been analyzed, and the results confirm the fact that phonology can continue to evolve after adolescence. This evidence is a radical departure from expectations based on Labov's and Trudgill's recent publications.

Table 4. Men whose Vowel Diagrams are presented.

| SPEAKER | BIRTH DATE | EDUCATION | ML | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 73 | 1920 | 20+ | .84 | - |
| 30 | 1914 | 7 | .33 | (+) |
| 25 | 1944 | 20+ | .84 | (+) |
| 2 | 1946 | 9 | .09 | + |

The data to be presented are not schematic drawings like those in Figures 1-3, but are plotted from acoustical measurements. Each diagram uses the traditional format for formant displays which most closely resembles an articulatory vowel diagram.[7] First let us look at older speakers' data.

**Speaker 73:** Let us compare the 1971 and 1984 patterns for an older medical specialist, Speaker 73. After the age of 50, little change should be ex-pected for a speaker. In addition, Figure 4 shows that Speaker 73's non-high vowels were not too conservative to begin with, and we are not surprised that most of 73's vowel pattern does not shift between 1971 (marked with the codes) and 1984 (shown, where significantly different, with vector arrows). Note that monophthongal vowel nuclei for this speaker reflect the 'legitimated language': Mid-open vowels overlap neither mid-high nor low vowels. Nuclei of exceptional classes are 'merged' with the main (ɛ:r) and (ɔ:r) vowel classes, while the residual classes remain separate. The arrows show that the nuclear positions of residual classes have lowered toward the new norm along with (ɔ:r).[8]

**Speaker 30:** Figure 5 shows that Speaker 30's 1971 vowel pattern is more vernacular than 73's, but was already advanced toward the newer norm, and only residual classes are unmerged. Vector arrows show that (ɔ:r) has shifted toward the new vernacular norm, and some subgroups of his (ɛ:) have continued to advance quite significantly toward /a/.

Now let us look at two YOUNGER SPEAKERS. Remember that by 1971 most speakers had already shifted to the newer vowel system shown on Figure 3, and so, like all the women, are less likely to have a significant shift toward that position later.

**Speaker 25:** was a pediatric resident in 1971, and is a pediatrician today. Figure 6 shows that in 1971 nuclei of both the residual and exceptional classes had already advanced toward the primary classes, which are already quite open: (ɛ:) overlaps /a/, and (ɔ:) overlaps /ɑ:/. The vectors show that in 1984 the vowel targets have advanced further: (ɛ:) is behind the /a/, and (ɔ:) in front of the /ɑ:/.

**Speaker 2:** was, and is, a manual laborer; Figure 7 shows that in 1971 his vowel system was quite conservative: in fact, earlier auditory analysis showed him to be among the most conservative of even the younger working class men, despite the fact that his was one of the most relaxed interviews.[9] Note that in 1971 the monophthongal nuclei of words in the 'ERF' class (one of the conservative classes of lexical exceptions shown on Table 3) patterns with the *bête-pâte*, or 'E' class, and that the 'ENC' class (another conservative class on Table 3) is still even more closed than /o/,[10] while other (ɔ:r) and (ɑ:) are also quite high.

Speaker 2 has not changed his neighborhood or his type of work. Both his interviews were with his wife and children present, and were very similar in style. Thibault would project that Mr.2 would accommodate toward the newer pattern in 1984. Of course, since he was already twenty-five, and had been working for eight years, Labov would have projected that his dialect would be 'wired in', and that no change would occur between 1971 and 1984. However, when we compare the interview data, we find that his phonological system has advanced radically toward the newer pattern! **Figure 7 reveals that statistical analysis of individual lexical classes shows significant change in almost all vowel positions for those classes shown here.** Changes between the 1971 and 1984 data for diphthongized tokens is even more significant. By 1984, most classes have moved toward the newer norm. While the residual lexical classes are still distinct, the exceptional classes have remerged with the main class -- the lexical diffusion has 'been resolved'.

**CONCLUSIONS:** While only four speakers have been looked at, the data permit some conclusions to be drawn.

1. The lengthened vowels do not follow the pattern of chain shifting proposed in Labov Yaeger and Steiner (1972), as shown on Figure 1. The vowels went from the raised position on Figure 2 to the lowered position on Figure 3, but fall from mid-high

position without having gone through high position. We find no evidence that the nuclei of long vowels become less peripheral at any point.

2. Our results contradict the hypothesis that lexical diffusion is necessarily ultimately 'resolved'. We see that the residual lexical classes like those on Table 1 remain separate, while the exceptional lexical classes, like those on Tables 2-3 are remerged with the relevant class.

3. While both Labov (1982) and Trudgill (1986) have recently claimed that phonology is 'wired in' by adolescence or earlier, fine acoustic phonetic analysis demonstrates that phonological changes -- that is, the advancing chain shift of (phonologically) mid-low vowels from the mid-high position shown in Figure 2 to the lower position shown on Figure 3 -- can continue after adolescence for native speakers of a dialect. This is not a conscious change. Not surprisingly, the difference is much more significant among speakers whose phonology was more conservative originally. The difference is less likely to be statistically significant if the speaker's vowel system was more innovative in the original study, even if the speaker is under forty. We already have clear evidence that in a given interview style, four postadolescent speakers who have not changed their social positions, have, nonetheless, significantly advanced their interview style of speech toward the newer norm.

OLDER SPEAKERS

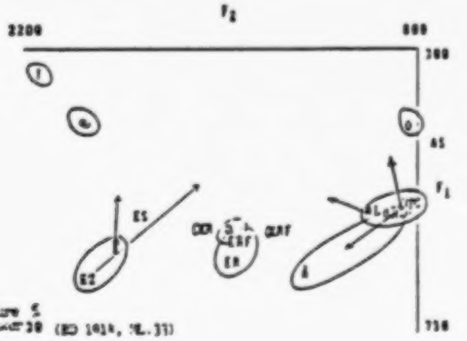


Figure 2
Speaker 30 (BD 1918, ML .33)

YOUNGER SPEAKERS

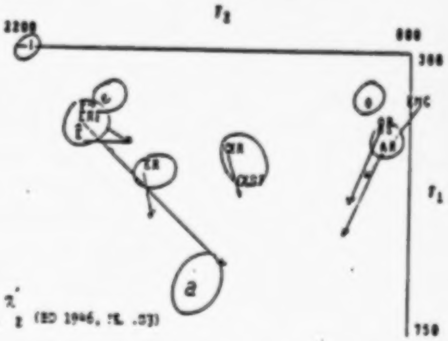


Figure 3
Speaker 1 (BD 1946, ML .03)

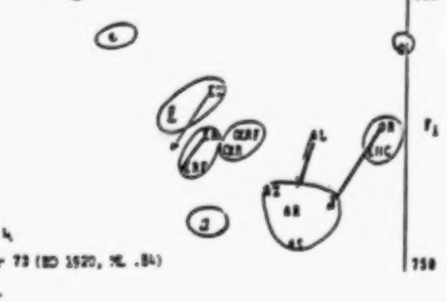


Figure 4
Speaker 73 (BD 1920, ML .84)

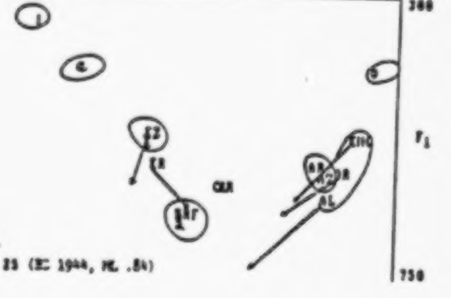


Figure 5.
Speaker 23 (BD 1944, ML .84)

## Notes:

---

[*] Work on this project would have been impossible without funding from the US National Science Foundation ( #BNS 8608714), my affiliation with the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington DC, and with the Anthropology and Linguistics Depts. at the Université de Montréal. The data were primarily collected by the members of the Ethnolinguistics Lab at the Université de Montréal Anthropology Dept: Thanks are due primarily to Pierrette Thibault, David Sankoff and Henrietta Cedergren for allowing me access to their data, and to Laurent Santerre for access to his laboratory. Statistical advice was provided by David Sankoff, and statistical support by Marc Bourdeau. I especially profitted from discussions & correspondence with Pierrette Thibault, John Harris, Crawford Feagin and Gregory Guy. Remaining infelicities and heresies are my own. Earlier versions of this paper were delivered at the Canadian Linguistics Association meetings in 1987, and at the Sociolinguistics Symposium in 1988.

[1] Another important factor, which is beyond the bounds of the present study, is that the diphthongs then become monophthongs. This is assumed to be a change from above. The initial assumption was that the change from above [that is, the monophthongization of diphthongs] would advance (perhaps) more rapidly than the change from below [the change from the raised nuclei shown on Figure 2 to the lowered nuclei on Figure 3]. Evidence bearing on this problem will be presented elsewhere.

[2] Researchers in neurolinguistics (Fromkin 1987), and in language learning (e.g., Lenneberg 1967; Krashen 1981) have come to similar conclusions.

[3] This helps explain why 'mergers advance at the expense of phonological distinctions' (Labov 1982). If phonological distinctions can only be maintained by speakers with at least the mother native to the dialect area, the population must remain very stable for a distinction to survive.

[4] Sociolinguists have used the term 'Standard', or 'Prestige' dialect. Those who discuss diglossic speech situations are likely to refer to it as the H (for 'High') speech form. Here we will follow the terminology of the Montreal research group which refers to this more prestigious form as the speech 'legitimated' by the ruling classes.

[5] All of these interviews have been transcribed, and archived on the University of Montreal CDC, which makes them accessible for linguistic research. Copies of both 1971 and 1984 interviews, and their transcripts, have been made available for this project. In addition, tapes of other speakers have been collected from the archives of the National Library and of Radio Canada.

[6] Diphthongization provides the last of the major linguistic variables under analysis, but the vowel charts which appear on the transparencies only display the means for the monophthongal tokens.

[7] All tapes used for acoustic analysis are high-quality second generation tapes (for 1971 interviews) or cassettes (for 1984 interviews, and for data requested from the National or Radio Canada Sound Archives). Vowel tokens to be analyzed are coded and spliced onto a tape file which is then digitally analyzed, using the ILS program package (Markel, et al 1985.) This rough analysis is used to determine duration and the first two formant peaks for each vowel. Computer-analysed vowels are measured immediately after the transition from the preceding consonant (as discussed in Labov, Yaeger & Steiner 1972), and again immediately before the transition to the following

---

consonant. These transitions are longer in MF than in the English dialects reported in earlier studies. The program then measures the duration, and presents the analyst with the formants as tracked. If formants, amplitudes, and band-widths are in order, the code, and initial and final formant frequencies for $F_1$ and $F_2$ are enterred into the memory, along with their $F_0$, and the duration. If problems are evident from the tracked formants as presented, the material is analyzed using FFT sections. Paradis (1985) found that even measuring with the Real Time Analyzer, using only fully stressed tokens, approximately 20% of his measurements had to be discarded. Since this project attempts to analyze unstressed as well as stressed vowels, the abort rate is presumably higher. Vowels shorter than 55msec. are not retained in the figures presented here.

[8] Yaeger-Dror and Kemp (in press) found that all male speakers were more conservative for (ɔ:r) in 1971, while only the older men with low ML and little education were conservative with (ɛ:r)

[9] In both interviews, informality is obvious from the topics chosen by the interviewee, who has strong, unorthodox political opinions to voice and who is not embarrassed in either interview to discuss raunchy topics generally avoided between strangers. Informality is revealed not only by the laughter, speed and intonational variation, but by his relaxed use of 'sacrage': Among the speakers interviewed, when they are asked to define 'bad speech', most speakers (including Mr. 2) refer to profanity -- 'sacrage' --as archetypical of 'bad speech'. Yet, Mr. 2's use of profanity in both interviews marks them as quite informal, even relative to other informal interviews in the corpus as a whole. In short, Mr. 2's speech is consistently informal in both interviews.

[10] The difference between 'ERF' and other 'ER', and between 'ENC' and other 'OR' is highly significant.

## References:

**Beebe**,Leslie & Giles, Howard (1984) Speech accommodation theories. IJSL 46: 5-32.

**Bell**, Allan (1984) Language style as audience design. Language in Society 13: 145-204.

**Bourhis**,Richard(Ed.)1984) Conflict and language planning in Quebec. Clavedon Multilingual Matters.

**Chambers**, Jack & Trudgill, Peter (1980) Dialectology. Cambridge CUP.

**Coupland**, Nikolas (1980) Style shifting in a Cardiff work setting. Language in Society 9: 1-12.

___ (1984) Accommodation at work:some phonological data and their implications. IJSL 46:49-70.

**Dumas**, Denis (1987) Nos facons de parler Montreal Université du Québec Press.

**Fromkin**, Victoria (1987) 'Biological foundations of language.' Presented at CLA/ Conference, Hamilton, Ont.

**Giles**, Howard (1984) Speech Accommodation. IJSL 46

______,Bourhis, Richard & Taylor, Donald (1977) Toward a theory of language in ethnic group relations. In Giles, H. (Ed.) Language ethnicity and intergroup relations, pp.307-349. New York Academic.

**Gendron**, J.-D. (1966) Tendances phonétiques du français parlé au Canada. Québec PUL.

**Hindle**,Donald (1980) The social and situational conditioning of phonetic variation.Unp.PhD,UPenna.

**Kemp**, William (1981) Major patterns in Montreal French In Sankoff, D.& Cedergren, H. (Eds)Variation Omnibus Edmonton Linguistic Research Inc.

**Krashen**, Stephen (1981) The neurological correlates of language acquisition: Current research. In Stephen Krashen, Second language acquisition and second language learning, pp. 70-83. Oxford Pergamon.

**Labov**, William (1966) The social stratification of English in NY City Speech. Washington, DC. CAL.

____ (1972) Sociolinguistic Patterns. Philadelphia UPenna Press.

___ (1981) Resolving the neogrammarian hypothesis. Language 57: 267-308.

___ (1982) Building on empirical foundations. In Lehmann, W. & Malkiel, Y. (Eds.) Building on empirical foundations. pp.17-92. Philadelphia Benjamins.

____, Cohen, Paul, Robins, C. & Lewis, J.F. (1968) A study of the nonstandard English of Negro and Puerto Rican speakers in New York City. Final Report, Cooperative Research Project 3288. Office of Education, Washington, DC.

____, Yaeger, Malcah & Steiner, Richard. (1972) A quantitative study of sound change in progress. Philadelphia US Regional Survey.

**Lenneberg**, Eric (1967) Biological foundations of language. New York Wiley.

**Lennig**, Matthew (1978) Acoustic Measurement of Linguistic Change: The modern Paris vowel system. Penn Dissertation Series:1 Philadelphia US Regional Survey.

**Markel**, John, et al, (1985) Setting the standard in software systems for interactive signal processing. Technical Manual. Sta. Barbara Signal Technology, Inc.

**Martinet**, André & Walter, Henriette (1973) Dictionnaire de la prononciation francaise dans son usage réel. Paris France-Expansion.

**Milroy**, James (1980) Lexical alternation and the history of English. In Traugott, E., La Brum, R. Shepherd, S. (Eds.) Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 14:355-61. Amsterdam Benjamins.

____ & Harris, John (1980) When is a merger not a merger? English World-Wide 1: 199-210.

**Paradis,** Claude (1985) An acoustic study of variation and change in the vowel system of Chicoutimi and Jonquière. Unp. PhD, U of Penna

**Payne,** Arvilla (1980) Factors controlling the acquisition of the Philadelphia dialect by out of state children. In Labov, William (Ed.) Locating language in time and space. pp. 143-178. New York Academic Press.

**Sankoff,** David & Laberge, Suzanne (1978) The linguistic market and the statistical explanation of variability. In Sankoff, D. (Ed.) Linguistic Variation: Models and Methods. pp.239-250. New York Academic Press.

____ ,et al.(1973) Sample survey methods and computer assisted analysis in the study of grammatical variation. In Darnell, R. (Ed.) Canadian languages in their social context. pp. 7-64. Edmonton Linguistic Research, Inc.

**Shockey,** Linda (1984) All in a flap: long-term accommodation in phonology. IJSL 46:87-96.

**Thibault,** Pierrette (1983) Équivalence et grammaticalisation. Unp. PhD., University of Montreal.

____ & Daveluy, Michèle (1986, to appear) A few hints about change in Montreal French. Paper delivered at NWAVE- XV, Stanford.

____ & Vincent, Diane (1987) La transcription ou la standardisation des productions orales LINX 16 (special issue)

**Trudgill,** Peter (1986) Dialects in Contact. Oxford Blackwell.

**Walter,** Henriette (1977) La phonologie du français. Paris PUF.

**Wang,** William S.Y. (1977) ...

Yaeger-Dror, Malcah (1986, ms.) Center and periphery in sociolinguistic analysis. To appear in Flinker, Noam (Ed.) Center and Periphery in language and literature.

_____& Bourdeau, M. (1978) Montreal French Vowel Durations. Rapport Technique, EP80-R-8, École Polytechnique, 12pp; JASA 63:S87.

____&_____ ( in press). Patterned symmetry in Montreal French vowel shifts. In Fasold, R. & Schiffrin (Eds.) Philadelphia Benjamins.

# SPEECH DISORDER AS A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROBLEM

E. Douglas-Cowie
(Department of English, Queen's University, Belfast)
R. Cowie
(Department of Psychology, Queen's University, Belfast)

## 1. Introduction

Sociolinguists have studied a wide variety of speech behaviours which reflect geographical, historical, social and cultural groupings. But they have paid little attention to speech behaviours that fall outside the boundary of normality. The study of abnormal speech, however, is a natural extension of the issue of stigmatised speech that has long been central to sociolinguistics. This paper suggests that sociolinguistics not only has a natural interest in the study of abnormal speech but that it has a necessary role to fill. The application of sociolinguistics to abnormal speech also raises issues which are important for sociolinguistic theory in general.

The paper focuses on a particular variety of abnormal speech - the speech disorder resulting from postlingually acquired deafness. This speech disorder is a good illustration of the role that sociolinguistics can play in the study of disordered speech. Although several studies indicate that postlingually acquired deafness leads to speech deterioration ( Penn 1955, Zimmerman and Rettaliata 1981, Abberton et al. 1983, Cowie and Douglas-Cowie 1983, Tye et al. 1983, Plant 1984, Douglas-Cowie et al. 1987), there is a tendency to be dismissive about the problem. For example, a recent clinically oriented study concludes that speech deterioration in acquired deafness is 'not clinically significant' and that speakers do not warrant therapy (Goehl and Kaufman 1984). Several factors contribute to this kind of assessment (see Cowie et al.1986), but one is that deafened speech is often assessed on criteria which are narrowly functional (i.e. can it be understood) or comparative (i.e. compared to prelingual deaf speech it is not a problem) rather than in terms of social acceptability. This is an indefensibly narrow approach to the assessment of speech, since it ignores the social dimension which sociolinguists have shown is fundamental to speech communication. This paper rests on the principle that if deafened speech is, in fact, a socially stigmatised variety, then it is a disorder that deserves serious attention.

Clinicians have made this kind of point in connection with various speech problems, including lateral lisps, stammering, and abnormal voice qualities (Silverman 1976, Turnbaugh et al 1981, Blood et al. 1979). But there have been relatively few studies in the area, and their impact appears to have been limited. It seems likely that this will remain so while studies are isolated from each other and from our general understanding of speech as a social phenomenon.

The present study has its roots in a model due to Douglas-Cowie and Cowie (1984) which suggests how a broader and theoretically deeper analysis of disordered speech might develop. Deafened and control subjects are compared to establish the basic point that listeners respond differentially to the two groups. But the study goes beyond this in two crucial ways.

1. The study attempts to identify the basic types of judgement that underlie listeners' responses, and to establish which types of judgement are particularly likely to be abnormal when the speaker is deafened. The immediate reason for doing this is that one needs to understand the types of adverse reaction that are likely to arise if one is to counter them effectively. In a wider perspective,

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 155-166
© the authors

this aspect of the study reflects a central challenge for sociolinguistically oriented work on abnormal speech: that is, to achieve a cohesive account of the different kinds of reaction that may be evoked by different forms of speech, defective as well as normal.

2.The study attempts to identify the features of speech which are responsible for particular types of reaction. This too is a concern which has both immediate practical relevance and theoretical implications which invite wider research. These theoretical implications include, for instance, whether traditional phonetic categories capture the distinctions which are important for understanding reactions to abnormal speech.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Subjects

Two groups of subjects were involved. The first, the speaker sample, provided the stimuli, and consisted of 47 postlingually deafened speakers and 19 control speakers. The second, the listener sample, responded to the stimuli and comprised 660 normal hearing listeners.

All subjects in the speaker sample were from Northern Ireland. Deafened speakers were selected to represent a range of postlingually acquired hearing losses from moderate to profound.They were grouped into two broad categories, referred to as the hard of hearing group and the profoundly deafened group. The cut off point used was an average loss in the better ear of 80dB: this threshold gave a reasonable fit to the intuitive distinction between those who seemed to rely mainly on lipreading for speech reception and those who still heard speech (for comment on this distinction see Cowie and Stewart 1987). The distribution of hearing loss by age at onset of deafness is seen in Table 1. Age at onset is considered here because previous studies suggest that it has an important bearing on deafened speech (Douglas-Cowie et al. 1987).

| Level of loss | Age at onset | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | <5 | 6-15 | 16-35 | 36-55 | >65 |
| Profoundly deafened | 4 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| Hard of hearing | 6 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 1 |

Table 1: Age at onset and level of loss in the hearing impaired sample.

Two criteria governed the choice of controls. One was direct comparability with deafened speakers. Wherever possible, deafened people's similar aged siblings were recorded. The second criterion was representativeness of the range of accents found in the Belfast area which are known to depend on sex, age, and variables linked to social status (Milroy 1981, Douglas-Cowie 1984).

The listeners were 660 university students from Northern Ireland. They had no specialised knowledge of speech or deafness, and they did not know that the study was concerned with deafness.

### 2.2 Procedure

Each of the deafened and control speakers was tape recorded in comparable quiet conditions using a high quality tape-recorder. Two types of speech sample were obtained.
(1) Reading. Subjects read five short passages designed to include the range of phonemes in Ulster English and to be easy to read. The passages differed widely in style, ranging from an approximation to everyday chit chat to a more literary narrative style.
(2) Less formal speech. Subjects were asked to describe what was happening in each of three cartoon strips taken, for simplicity, from a child's book. This approach gave passages that were comparable in subject matter and tone, but reasonably informal in style.
Each listener heard a tape recording of all of the passages from one speaker, and shadowed them to provide a measure of intelligibility (reported in Douglas-Cowie et al. 1987). Ten listeners heard each speaker. After the shadowing task subjects were asked to fill in a questionnaire on their reactions to and assessments of the speaker they had just heard.

The questionnaire consisted of 67 items. Responses were made on a five point scale ranging from "definitely agree" to "definitely disagree". The questionnaire was developed using previous sources concerned with reactions to deaf and deafened people's speech (Davison 1979, Nicholl 1981, Cowie and Douglas-Cowie 1983), stereotypes of deaf and deafened people (e.g. Bunting 1981), and general sociolinguistic work on reactions to speech (e.g. Giles and Powesland 1975, Scherer and Giles 1979). The items can be summarised under three main headings.
(1) Listeners' emotional reactions to deafened speakers. Particular questionnaire items here probed, for example, reactions of embarrassment, pity, frustration, sympathy, confusion.
(2) Listeners' assessments of deafened speakers. These involve assessments of their competence, their personality and social relationships, their educational and occupational status, and their psychological and physical states (e.g. depressed, anxious, mentally deficient, stroke victim, spastic).
(3) Listeners' assessments of their speech and language.
Seven questionnaire items dealt with aspects of speech. They asked whether the speech seemed generally normal, and whether it suffered from any of the following defects: difficult to understand; bad (slurred) articulation; strange quality of sound; monotony; bad control of pitch; bad control of volume. These items were intended to capture the major problems which the literature suggests might occur in deafened speech, but to express them in a way that would make sense to listeners with no knowledge of phonetics.
Five items related to speakers' ability to express themselves. They dealt with vocabulary, grammar, description, organisation of ideas, and imaginativeness. Differences on these dimensions would be expected to affect speakers' ratings, and so it is important to take them into consideration: but it would be surprising if these abilities were systematically affected by postlingual deafness.

## 3. Results.

The questionnaire data will be considered under three main headings, each relating to a different set of issues. All of the analyses used scores averaged across listeners (i.e. each speaker was assigned one score per questionnaire item). The most favourable possible response was always assigned a score of 5, and the least favourable a score of 1.

### 3.1. Ratings of deafened speech *per se* .

It is useful to begin by considering listeners' responses to questions about speech per se. This gives the reader some impression of the speech whose effects are under consideration, and also makes a number of points which are of particular interest to linguists.

Speech was judged on seven dimensions. For each of these, three t tests were carried out - one comparing the controls and the profoundly deafened group, one comparing the controls and the hard of hearing group, and one comparing the profoundly deafened group and the hard of hearing. These comparisons are summarised in Table 2.

| ITEM | MEAN SCORES (3=neutral, 1=definitely has defect) | | | T TESTS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | C (controls) | H (hard of hearing) | P (profound) | P vs C | H vs C | P vs H |
| Normal speech | 2.9 | 2.4 | 1.9 | *** | ** | ** |
| Hard to understand | 2.9 | 2.1 | 1.6 | *** | *** | ** |
| Slurred articulation | 3.3 | 2.4 | 1.9 | *** | *** | * |
| Strange sound quality | 3.1 | 2.5 | 2.2 | *** | *** | * |
| Monotonous | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.1 | ** | - | * |
| Bad control of pitch | 3.1 | 2.8 | 2.5 | ** | - | * |
| Bad control of volume | 3.1 | 2.9 | 3.0 | - | - | - |

Table 2: assessments of speech. The outcomes of t tests (one tailed) are represented as follows:
*** means p<0.001; ** means 0.01>p >0.001; * means 0.05> p > 0.01.

Three main points emerge from these findings.

1. Listeners judge deafened speech more negatively than normal speech. This applies to both hearing impaired groups, the hard of hearing and the profoundly deafened.

2.The extent of the loss affects the amount of deterioration which occurs. The profoundly deafened group receive significantly worse ratings than the hard of hearing on six of the seven items; and there are two items where the profoundly deafened differ significantly from the controls, but the hard of hearing do not.

3. Listeners find deafened speech noticeably abnormal in some respects, less so or not at all in others. Table 2 shows that deafened speakers' control of volume is not rated worse than controls', and that the differences involving control of pitch and monotony are less marked than those which involve quality, articulation, intelligibility and overall normality.

This evidence reinforces the point made by some studies which use trained observers (Penn 1955, Cowie and Douglas-Cowie 1983) - though not all (see Goehl and Kaufman 1984) - that postlingually acquired deafness can lead to speech deterioration. But it also makes two distinctive contributions. The first is to show that the changes produced by acquired deafness are apparent to ordinary listeners, not just to the trained ear. The second is to identify the aspects of deafened speech which are most salient to ordinary listeners. It is noticeable that these are not the aspects which have received most attention in the literature, and this raises questions about the relationship between phonetic and sociolinguistic work. Most of the literature on acquired deafness discusses characteristics which are easy to specify phonetically, but which this evidence suggests are not of prime importance for speakers' reception. Conversely, the characteristics which strike naive observers are not easily linked to formal phonetic concepts. This suggests that there is room for a joint sociolinguistic and phonetic approach to abnormal speech, aimed at providing phonetic categories which lend themselves to expressing socially important distinctions.

## 3.2. The dimensions underlying listeners' reactions and their relation to specific aspects of speech.

### 3.2.1 Rationale and concepts underlying the analysis.

Intuitively it seems most unlikely that the responses given by each subject reflect sixty-odd independent types of reaction, each quite separate from the other reactions that the questionnaire probed and from any other reaction that it might have probed (but happened not to). It seems much more likely that subjects' sixty-odd overt responses flowed from a smaller number of underlying types of reaction, each of which had some bearing on several of the overt responses which were studied, and would have a bearing on various other responses that were not studied. This kind of model is familiar from work which argues that accents related to social class cause speakers to be evaluated on dimensions such as prestige, trustworthiness, androgyny, etc. (e.g. Elyan et al.1978). One would expect to find familiar dimensions appearing in work with abnormal speech, but one would also expect new ones to become apparent. These would involve reactions which vary very little so long as speech is normal, and which only change noticeably as speech moves beyond the bounds of normality.

Factor analysis was used to derive a set of underlying reactions which would explain the questionnaire data. Roughly speaking, factor analysis organises items into clusters in such a way that (a) speakers who score relatively well on one item in the cluster are likely to score relatively well on the others, and (b) there is little or no relationship between a speaker's score on an item in one cluster and his score on items in any other cluster. The items which form a cluster are linked by a hypothetical 'factor': the analysis assigns each speaker a score on each factor in such a way that subjects' scores on a factor tend to correlate highly with their scores on each item in the associated cluster. The correlation between speakers' scores on a given factor and their scores on a questionnaire item is called the loading of the item on the factor.

In this study, each factor should (ideally) correspond to one of the basic ways in which listeners react to speakers. High loadings can have two kinds of interpretation, depending on the items involved. If two items involve a judgement about the speaker, and both have a high loading on the same factor, this suggests that both ratings are strongly influenced by a single underlying type of reaction (which corresponds to the factor). But if an item concerned with speech loads highly on the same factor, the natural inference is that that feature of speech contributes to producing the reaction.

### 3.2.2 The dimensions of listeners' reactions.

The factor analysis used Varimax extraction followed by an Orthotran oblique transformation. Ten questionnaire items were excluded in order to ensure sampling adequacy. The analysis yielded eleven factors, but four of these accounted (directly) for less than four per cent of the variance, and can be ignored.

The seven remaining factors are summarised in Table 3. The items associated with a factor are those whose loading on it is greater than 0.45. (This cut off associates most items with one and only one factor.) The factor summaries are based on these items (and occasionally others with slightly lower loadings which appear to clarify matters).

| **Summary description of factor** | **Characteristics attributed to high scorers:** speech & language | social & personal |
|---|---|---|
| Competence | good vocabulary, grammar, description, & organisation of ideas | organised, intelligent, likely to reach high levels in education (4 items) and employment (4 items). |
| Warmth | not monotonous | friendly, cheerful, cooperative, able to handle close friendships, not depressed. |
| Social poise | - | self confident, amusing; not timid, withdrawn, or anxious. |
| Stability | - | reliable, sensible, able to handle close friendships and working relationships. |
| Disability | poor articulation, strange quality, hard to understand, not normal. | would evoke sympathy; might be deaf, mentally deficient, spastic, autistic, or a stroke victim. |
| Subnormality | poor control of volume and pitch | might not have achieved normal primary education |
| Social threat | - | listener anticipates that meeting speaker might cause embarrassment or shock , would be apprehensive about it. |

Table 3: Factors extracted from the questionnaire data.

The next section uses these factors to examine how reactions to deafened speakers differ from reactions to the controls. However the factor pattern itself makes two significant points.

1. The factor analysis confirms that there are socially significant forms of reaction to speech which are easily overlooked if one studies only normal speakers. Table 3 is laid out to emphasise this point. The first four factors involve reactions which are familiar from work on the sociolinguistics of normal speech. The last three factors have no obvious analogues in the sociolinguistic literature: they would not be expected to, since most normal speakers presumably cluster near the bottom end of all these dimensions. But the fact that the factors emerge in this study indicates that in a wider sample, people do evoke substantially and consistently different reactions on these dimensions.

A clear conclusion is that research on the social significance of abnormal speech should not confine itself to exploring dimensions that are familiar from the sociolinguistics of normal speech. But these dimensions are relevant to sociolinguistics as a whole, not just to research on abnormal speech. It is an important point about normal speech that for all its variability, it maintains these reactions within a very narrow range. Many people speak so as to seem socially disadvantaged, but very few speak so as to seem disabled. This needs explanation. The need for explanation is nicely illustrated by the fact that acquired deafness can lead people to stray outside the bounds of normality. What acquired deafness removes is the ability to monitor one's speech. The fact that losing that ability leads people to sound abnormal indicates that staying within the bounds of normality is not a trivial achievement: it depends on continuous, active monitoring.

2. Four factors have substantial loadings on speech or language items. It is striking that speech and

language items do associate with reactions in a clear cut and intuitively reasonable way. This suggests that it is possible to pinpoint the speech characteristics which produce particular kinds of reaction, and provides a preliminary picture of some links. This kind of information could clearly be used to direct therapy. However the present data have to be treated with care.

The general problem is that subjects' descriptions do not translate simply into objective phonetic categories. For instance the term 'monotony' as applied to deafened speech may refer to lack of pitch movement or to excessive use of a particular pattern of pitch movement (Cowie et al.1988b). Also the fact that because a factor lacks speech-related elements does not mean that it has no phonetic basis: it simply means that none of the terms on offer captured the relevant dimensions of speech.

This problem is compounded by the fact that listeners' impressions of a speaker may influence their descriptions of his speech and language. The linguistic abilities associated with the first factor provide a revealing example. Listeners had little direct evidence of speakers' linguistic skills: most of what they heard consisted of reading passages, whose vocabulary, grammar, and expression were due to the writer, not the reader, and were the same for all readers. This suggests that listeners may have assessed linguistic competence not on the basis of the linguistic performance they heard, but rather on the basis of speech variables which created a general impression of the speaker's competence.To anticipate, this view is reinforced by evidence that deafened speakers' ratings on this factor were worse than the controls: there is no reason to believe that acquired deafness impairs people's linguistic abilities.

These difficulties mean that the present evidence needs to be supplemented with research which looks directly at objective correlates of listeners' judgements. Research of this kind is currently in progress, looking at potentially relevant acoustic features (Cowie et al 1988a), features of intonation (Cowie et al. 1988b), and the language used by speakers in the informal passages (Beagon, in preparation).

### 3.3 The effect of hearing loss on listeners' assessment of speakers

There is a strong overall relationship between hearing level and speaker assessment. This is indicated by two way analyses of variance which take account of all the questionnaire items. These show that overall the profoundly deafened group fared worse on listeners assessments than the hard of hearing ( $F_{1,45} = 6.54$, $p=0.014$) and that the hard of hearing fared worse than the controls ($F_{1,39} = 9.643$, $p=0.0035$). But each comparison between groups is associated with a significant interaction ($p< 0.0001$) between hearing and item, indicating that the effect of hearing impairment differs from item to item. The results of the factor analysis provide a way of breaking down the data which takes these variations into account.

Two types of test were used - analysis of variance and regression analysis. Each makes a particular contribution. Regressions can handle several continuous variables simultaneously, and show how they affect scores related to a given factor. Analysis of variance is able to examine differences between the major categories of subjects (profoundly deaf, hard of hearing and controls), and also to test for differences among the items associated with a single factor.

Regression was used to examine links between the factors and objective variables of two types: audiological variables, and socio-demographic variables which are known to bear on speech. The analyses reported here use five such variables: socio-economic status; sex; age at time of testing; average pure tone threshold in the better ear; and age at onset of deafness for the profoundly deafened (both other groups had scores of zero on this variable). These were chosen after exploratory work with a wider range of variables: none of the others contributed significantly to predicting any of the dependent variables which were considered.

Two sets of regressions were carried out. In the first set, the dependent variables were the factor scores which (theoretically) give pure estimates of the underlying reactions associated with each factor. The second set used what will be called factor item scores. For any given factor, a subject's factor item score was the average of his scores on the various items associated with that factor in Table 3. Table 4 summarises the results.

| | PURE FACTOR SCORES | | | | | FACTOR ITEM SCORES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | status | age | sex | loss | onset | status | age | sex | loss | onset |
| Competence | .0007 | .003 | | | | .0004 | .002 | | .002 | |
| Warmth | | | .09 | | | | | .009 | .06 | |
| Social poise | | | | | | | | | .01 | |
| Stability | | | .09 | | | | | .003 | .04 | |
| Disability | | | | .0001 | .01 | | | .08 | .0001 | .02 |
| Subnormality | | | | | | | | | .01 | |
| Social threat | | | | | | .04 | | | .004 | |

Table 4: Regression analyses on factor scores and factor item scores. Each entry shows the probability that a variable's correlation with a factor score is due to chance. A blank indicates that the probability is greater than 0.1.

The regressions on pure factor scores show a striking pattern. Only the disability factor is linked to hearing loss. Three of the other factors are linked to standard socio-demographic variables (youth and high status favour impressions of competence, females are perceived as warmer and more stable), and the rest are unrelated to any of the variables considered here.

The strong interpretation of this pattern is that one and only one underlying reaction is affected by the audible results of acquired deafness. This is an intriguing conjecture, and it may be true. However it is important to acknowledge that it may also be an artefact. This is because factor analysis is designed to ensure that scores on one factor correlate weakly or not at all with scores on any other. It follows from this property that a variable is unlikely to correlate significantly with more than one factor. The neat relationship between hearing loss and the disability factor may simply reflects these properties of the analysis, or it may have a deep psychological reality: there is no way of deciding without additional evidence.

The regressions on the right of Table 4 use factor item scores. These are only indirectly related to the hypothetical reactions measured by pure factor scores. Factor analysis assumes that a subject's response to any individual item is shaped by several underlying reactions: hence a factor item score, which is a simple average of responses to several items, will generally reflect several underlying reactions too. But conversely, factor item scores are directly related to the way subjects answer particular groups of questions, whereas pure factor scores are not. This means, for instance, that no mathematical subtleties prevent the same variable from correlating with several factor item scores.

The regressions on factor item scores show that hearing loss does in fact relate to all the groups of responses. It may be that only one underlying reaction is affected by the audible results of acquired deafness, but if so, that reaction exerts a significant influence on most kinds of response that listeners make. Also of interest are the relationships between audiological and socio-demographic variables. Regression analyses were carried out partly to check whether differences between groups were actually due to socio-demographic variables rather than hearing loss.The regressions on factor item scores make it clear that loss is related to listener reactions even when socio-demographic variables are taken into account. A subtler point is that five of the seven types of reaction are influenced by both socio-demographic and audiological variables. This suggests that the two types of variable have related influences on speech: they cannot be kept apart in separate theoretical domains.

In addition to the regressions, three two way analyses of variance were carried out on each set of items associated with a major factor. The controls were compared to each hearing impaired group, and the two hearing impaired groups to each other. Three main points emerged.

1. Hearing x item interactions were examined in order to check whether the items associated with each factor behaved relatively homogeneously (in the sense that differences between groups of speakers were relatively constant across items). With one minor exception, they indicate that the sets of items derived from factor analysis were reasonably coherent. None of the profoundly deafened/ hard of hearing comparisons produced a significant interaction between hearing level and item.Three sets of items showed no significant interaction in either hearing impaired/ control comparison - the sets associated with poise, subnormality, and social threat. In the other four sets, both interactions were significant or very nearly so. But only in one case did the interaction appear to mean that one item was behaving differently from the others in the group: the item 'able to handle close friendships', which (uniquely) appears in two factors, showed a markedly different pattern from the other items associated with either factor.

2. The profoundly deafened were rated significantly worse than the controls on every set of items, and significantly worse than the hard of hearing on every set of items but the one concerned with competence.

3. The hard of hearing differed significantly from the controls on only two sets of items, those concerned with competence and those concerned with disability. The pattern of interactions (see 1 above) gave no grounds for thinking that they fared worse than controls on some individual items in other groups.

## 4. Discussion.

The work described here can be considered on two levels: for what it indicates about deafened people, and for what it offers sociolinguists.

The simplest point about deafened people is that their hearing loss does have an appreciable effect on their speech. So far as the profoundly deafened are concerned, this adds to a balance of evidence which already pointed in this direction. But no previous paper has given clear evidence that groups like the hard of hearing in this study have noticeably abnormal speech.

The use of factor analysis makes it possible to separate out the kinds of reaction that deafened speakers are likely to face, and the aspects of speech which give rise to them.

The central reaction appears to be the one associated with the factor described as 'disability'. Listeners registered that something was organically wrong with speakers from both deafened groups. They did not know what: they recognised that it could have been deafness, but they also felt that the problem could have been a disorder of the brain, or of motor control. The characteristics of speech which suggested this appear to relate to rapid changes - in the vocal folds or the articulators - rather than to slower changing quantities such as pitch or volume.

The simplest reading of the factor analysis (based on the pure factor scores) is that this is the only basic reaction which depended on speakers' hearing. It is impossible to evalute this conjecture without additional evidence, though one line of reasoning gives some grounds to question it. This hinges on the fact that some other factors involve speech related items. Monotony appears to suggest that speakers lack emotional warmth, which is consistent with the findings of Frick (1985) and others that intonation is used to assess speakers' emotions: and poor control of pitch and volume appear to suggest a lack of basic education. The profoundly deafened were described as markedly more monotonous than the hard of hearing or the controls, and somewhat worse at controlling pitch, and this tends to suggest that listeners may form an underlying impression that they lack warmth and basic culture.

Be this as it may, it is clear from the factor item scores that the profoundly deafened fared worse than the controls on every substantial group of responses. It may be that hearing-related speech abnormalities evoke only one basic type of reaction in listeners; but if so, that reaction affects a wide range of outward responses.

The hard of hearing present a different picture. The only aspects of their speech which differed significantly from the controls' were those which related to the disability factor. Correspondingly they fared worse than the controls on the items related to disability. They also differed from controls on one other set of items - those which related to speakers' competence. Somewhat surprisingly, they were rated no better than the profoundly deafened on the 'competence' items. This may well be explained by the fact that both status and age affect judgements of competence (as the regression analysis shows): the hard of hearing were generally older, and of lower status, than the profoundly deafened group.

These findings point towards the conclusion that profoundly deafened people face real and extensive social obstacles because of their speech. But the argument is incomplete without information about how the findings transfer to a real situation, where listeners have information from a speaker's visible behaviour and the content of what he says as well as from his speech per se. Preliminary work argues against over-optimism about the effects of face to face encounters (Cowie et al. in press). Given optimal conditions, a deafened speaker who is good at self presentation can create as good an impression as a normal hearing control. But the forms of self presentation which have this effect seem to be quite specific, and some behaviours which create a good impression in their own right appear to malinteract badly with speech problems - presumably because listeners are unsettled by hearing impressive content presented in defective speech. Hearing impaired people also tend to exhibit non speech behaviours which create a bad impression, such as looking puzzled, using abnormal eye contact (as they must to lipread), and responding inappropriately or not at all to what an interlocutor says. Overall, it seems unlikely that other behaviours generally do much to mitigate the effects of deafened people's speech problems.

An appropriate response to this problem needs to draw on the various kinds of knowledge that have been considered in this paper. It is mainly the profoundly deafened who seem to need therapy: the hard of hearing have much more limited problems. Speech therapy as such should be directed towards the speech problems which are apparent to ordinary listeners, and more specifically towards problems which have a serious effect on their attitudes towards deafened speakers. This means giving priority to the problems which listeners described in terms of poor intelligibilty and abnormal quality and articulation: the fact that they are difficult to pin down phonetically should be an impetus to phonetic research, not an excuse for focusing on more tractable aspects of speech. If the practically important speech defects cannot be treated, then therapy needs to focus on ways of countering their effects. This approach is most likely to succeed if it rests on a clear understanding of the basic effects that the speech problems produce. For instance, the factor analysis reported here suggests that deafened speakers have little to gain from measures designed to boost their apparent status, since these will not counter the basic negative impression that their speech creates. This point is reinforced by the finding of Cowie et al. (in press) that there is no simple relationship between the way listeners react to self accounts spoken by hearing impaired speakers and the way they react to the content of the accounts in isolation from the speech.

For sociolinguists, the paper has attempted to identify a territory which is ripe for settlement, and some of the themes and techniques which are relevant to it. The study which is described in detail here depends on techniques - highly controlled presentation, response elicitation by questionnaire, and factor analysis - which have been widely and rightly criticised. But balanced criticism (e.g. Gould, 1981) focuses on the problems which arise when they are used in isolation and without an understanding of their limitations. This is why care has been taken to stress that they can be linked to other sources of information, and interpreted in keeping with intuitively reasonable assumptions. Handled in this way, they are powerful tools. More generally, the paper has attempted to show that disentangling listeners' responses to disordered speech is a large and intellectually challenging problem, with practical applications on the one hand, and the potential to open new perspectives on the study of normal speech on the other.

**Acknowledgement.** This research was supported by grant COO 232181 from the Economic and Social Research Council.

## 5. References

Abberton, E., Parker, A. and Fourcin, A. (1983) 'Speech improvement in deaf adults using laryngograph displays' In J.Pickett (ed) Papers from The Research Conference on Speech Processing Aids for the Deaf Washington D.C. Gallaudet Research Institute pp. 172-188

Blood, G., Mahan, B. and Hyman, M. (1979) 'Judging personality and appearance from voice disorders' Journal of Communication Disorders 12: 63-68

Beagon, F. in preparation. 'The contributions of speech and language variables to the assessment of deafened speakers' B.A. project, Department of Psychology, Queen's University, Belfast.

Bunting, C. (1981) 'Public attitudes to deafness: a survey carried out on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Security' London HMSO.

Cowie, R. and Douglas-Cowie, E. (1983) 'Speech in profound postlingual deafness' In M. Lutman and M.P.Haggard (eds) Hearing Science and Hearing Disorders London Academic Press pp. 183-230.

Cowie, R., Douglas-Cowie, E., Gailey, E.L. and Kerr, A.G. (1988a) 'Speech and allied problems in complete and profound acquired deafness' Report COO 2312181 to the Economic and Social Research Council.

Cowie, R., Douglas-Cowie, E. and Stewart, P. (1986) 'A response to Goehl and Kaufman (1984)' Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders 51: 183-186.

Cowie, R. Douglas-Cowie, E. and Rahilly, J. (1988b) 'The intonation of adults with postlingually acquired profound deafness: anomalous frequency and distribution' Proceedings of the 7th FASE Symposium, Speech '88 pp. 481-488.

Cowie, R. and Stewart, P. (1987) 'Acquired deafness and the family: A problem for psychologists' Irish Journal of Psychology 8: 138-154.

Cowie, R., McDaid, M., and Brankin, A. (in press) 'Speech impairments due to hearing loss: their effect on person perception in information-rich contexts' To appear in Belfast Working Papers in Linguistics 1988.

Davison, C. (1979) 'Attitudes towards the hearing impaired based on their speech' M.Sc.thesis, Department of Psychology, the Queen's University of Belfast.

Douglas-Cowie, E. (1984) 'The sociolinguistic situation in Northern Ireland' In P.Trudgill (ed) Language in the British Isles Cambridge CUP pp.533-545.

Douglas-Cowie, E. and Cowie, R. (1984) 'Sociolinguistics: a frame of reference' Journal of the Northern Ireland Speech and Language Forum 10: 89-104.

Douglas-Cowie, E., Cowie, R. and Stewart, P. (1987) 'Understanding speech deterioration in acquired deafness' In J.G. Kyle (ed) Adjustment to Acquired Hearing Loss: Analysis, Change and Learning Bristol Centre for Deaf Studies, University of Bristol pp. 65-79.

Elyan, O., Smith, P., Giles, H., and Bourhis, R. (1978) 'RP-accented female speech: the voice of perceived androgyny?' In P.Trudgill (ed) Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English London Edward Arnold pp. 122-131.

Frick, R.W. (1985) 'Communicating emotion: the role of prosodic features' Psychological Bulletin 97: 412-429.

Giles, H. and Powesland, P. (1975) Speech Style and Social Evaluation London Academic Press.

Goehl, H. and Kaufman, D. (1984) 'Do the effects of adventitious deafness include disordered speech?' Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders 49: 58-64.

Gould, S.J (1981) The Mismeasure of Man New York Norton.

Milroy, J. (1981) Regional accents of English: Belfast Belfast Blackstaff Press.

Nicholl, P. (1981) 'The social implications of speech deterioration in the post-lingually deaf' B.A. dissertation: Department of Psychology, the Queen's University of Belfast.

Penn,J. (1955) 'Voice and speech patterns in the hard of hearing' Acta Otolaryngologica Supplement 124.

Plant, G. (1984) 'The effects of an acquired profound hearing loss on speech production ' British Journal of Audiology 18: 39-48.

Scherer, K. and Giles, H. (eds) (1979) Social Markers in Speech Cambridge CUP.

Silverman, E. (1976) 'Listeners' impressions of speakers with lateral lisps' Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders 41: 547-552.

Turnbaugh, K.R., Guitar, B.E., and Hoffman, P.R. (1981) 'The attribution of personality traits: the stutterer and the nonstutterer' Journal of Speech and Hearing Research 24 : 288-299.

Tye, N., Zimmerman, G. and Kelso, S. (1983) '"Compensatory articulation" in hearing impaired speakers: a cinefluorographic study' Journal of Phonetics 11: 101-115.

Zimmerman, G. and Rettaliata, P. (1981) 'Articulatory patterns of an adventitiously deafened speaker: implications for the role of auditory information in speech production' Journal of Speech and Hearing Research 24: 169 - 179.

# A REBUTTAL OF ESSENTIALIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS*

Karol Janicki

(Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

## PART I

The term 'essentialist sociolinguistics' is my own term. Essentialism itself, however, can be traced back to Popper (1945, 1957, 1959, 1972), who uses the label in his critical argument against Aristotle. Aristotle claims that all things have their FORM or essences (1983). The essence of a thing is something like its internal source of change and motion (Popper 1945). It is that very Aristotelian philosophical standpoint that Popper refers to as 'essentialism'. For Aristotle (Popper 1945) the term that is to be defined is the name of the essence of a thing, and the defining formula the description of that essence.

Popper summarizes Aristotle's position in the following way:
'Aristotle saw the ultimate aim of all inquiry in the compilation of an encyclopedia containing the intuitive definitions of all essences, that is to say, their names together with their defining formulae; and that he considered the progress of knowledge as consisting in the gradual accumulation of such an encyclopedia...' (Popper 1945:12).
And further:
'Aristotle taught that in a definition we have first pointed to the essence - perhaps by naming it - and that we then describe it with the help of the describing formula; just as in an ordinary sentence like 'The puppy is brown', we first point to a certain thing by saying 'this puppy', and then describe it as 'brown'. And he taught that by thus describing the essence to which the term points which is to be defined, we determine or explain the meaning of the term also. Accordingly, the definition may at one time answer two very clearly related questions. The one is 'What is it?', for example, 'What is a puppy?'; it asks what the essence is which is denoted by the defining term. The other is 'What does it mean?', for example, 'What does puppy mean?'; it asks for the meaning of a term (namely of the term that denotes the essence' (Popper 1945:13).

It is important to remember that for Aristotle the significance of definitions consists in the fact that they are believed to allow the growth of knowledge. The reasoning runs that the more definitions we have, the more we have been able to say about the essences of things, and thus the vaster our knowledge.

According to Popper (1945 and others), the Aristotelian essentialist view of definitions is wrong. And there are basically two reasons for this. One is that there are absolutely no grounds for treating 'intellectual intuition',

**York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 167-178**
**© the author**

extolled by Aristotle, as the way to establish truth, or true knowledge. The other reason is that defining terms always leads to an infinite regression of definitions. Not only, Popper claims, do we not achieve much by proposing definitions, but we also lose much by introducing an unnecessary amount of verbosity.

Anyone adhering to the Aristotelian essentialist method of definition reads definitions 'from the left to the right'. That is, for instance, 'A calf is a young cow' where 'a young cow' is believed to tell us what 'calf' is. The danger of definitional infinite regress is easily seen as the questions that immediately come to the fore are: 'What is a cow?', and 'What is young?' answers to which will create an array of further questions. As this procedure hardly leads anywhere, it is discarding this way of handling definitions that, according to Popper, characterizes those sciences that have been moving forward. Those sciences are reputed to read definitions 'from the right to the left', i.e., with reference to our example above, we get 'A young cow is (called) a calf'. Truly, such definitions do not explain anything (but Aristotelian definitions did not, either, although they were claimed to do so). What they do is only to introduce one short label for a somewhat longish set of labels: 'they cut a long story short' (Popper 1945:14). Additionally, and importantly, such definitions may clarify a problem[1].

It follows that 'from the left to the right definitions' should not be taken seriously. Contrary to common belief, they do not make things simpler, or more precise; they make things more complicated and less precise. And this is primarily because any definition entails the necessity of further definitions with a continuously growing number of terms to be further defined. The 'from the right to the left definitions', though not explaining anything, are nevertheless very handy because they save discussion time and writing paper!

It is Popper's belief that the Aristotelian method of definition and essentialism taken together have not only been unhelpful in the understanding of the universe but also harmful in some ways. One negative effect that essentialism brings about is verbalism, i.e., talking about the meaning of words, which procedure seems to have no end. If one believes, however, that such 'looking for the right definition' in principle makes sense, much disillusionment is likely to ensue, because one will always feel that one falls short of catching that one right definition.

Essentialist thinking leads to what Popper (1945, 1972) calls 'what-is'-questions, e.g., 'What is love?', 'What is freedom?', 'What is science?', etc. If one agrees with the argument invoked in this paper, such questions are very unfortunate formulations never to receive any one unambiguous answer. It is important to remember, however, that both many scientists and a large number of lay people behave (the former in their research and the latter in their daily interaction) as if such a one unambiguous answer were possible, i.e., as if the question itself ('what-is'-question) were in principle legitimate.

For lack of space I can only mention here that implicit in the essentialist philosophy is the belief in, and thus the search for, precision in scientific expression. Popper manages to show, however, that similarly to the case of ultimate definitions (cf. above) precision is only a phantom, and trying to reach it (as many authors do) is thus a 'wild goose chase'.

It should be mentioned in passing that Popper's criticism of essentialism is perhaps the most salient criticism existing in the literature. There have been, however, other authors who more or less at the same time detected the Aristotelian fallacy. I have in mind here the general semanticists of the thirties and forties of this century; especially A. Korzybski and S.I. Hayakawa[2]. Also, more recently, pertinent aspects of Aristotle's philosophy have been challenged by cognitive linguists (e.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Johnson 1987)[3].

In what has preceded I have very briefly presented the idea of essentialism and the criticism rejecting it. In what follows I will concentrate exclusively on sociolinguistics. Thus, I will try to show that, similarly to other disciplines, sociolinguistics still suffers to some degree from the ailment called 'essentialism'. That is, I claim that a significant number of sociolinguists (but clearly not all) either consciously or unconsciously, and either explicitly or implicitly, still follow the Aristotelian method of definition.

## PART II

The following examples are intended to point to some evidence for my conviction that many sociolinguists are essentialists. At the many linguistics conferences in which I have taken part I have been asked what 'context' was, and that question, I am sure, was not an attempt at having me theoretically define context. Similarly, I have witnessed many interchanges in which the straightforward questions such as 'What is standard language?', 'What is a variety?', 'What is the sociolect?', 'What is communicative competence?' were asked[4]. All my experience as a (socio) linguist makes me claim that many of our widely respected colleagues believe that 'What-is'-questions such as those quoted above make sense. Even more discouraging and disappointing is the way those questions are answered. Namely, dozens of times, I have personally heard answers such as: 'Well, the question is obviously very important, I know, and it is a very difficult question; I realize that it has not been answered unambiguously and convincingly, as yet,' and, possible, added to it, 'Unfortunately, in sociolinguistics there are still terminological disputes, and this is a difficult problem, indeed'.

No doubt, in the area of sociolinguistics there are still terminological disputes. A marvelous reflection of such a dispute is Siegel's article (1985), where he reports on definitional debates and partly contributes to them.

Siegel discusses a number of definitions of 'koines' and 'koineization', finds fault with all of them, proposes his own definition, but even in his own view he still sees problems. He states that:
'A major question concerning the terms koine and koineization is whether they should (my emphasis, K.J.) be restricted to dialect mixing or extended to other kinds of language mixing' (368).
If one wants to take the statement seriously one immediately gets into the problem of defining dialect, language, and mixing. Having been preoccupied with problems such as:
'But to say that pidginization and koineization are different is not to say that pidginization cannot play a part in koineization' (372),
Siegel addresses himself to the question of the difference (or similarity) between creolization and koineization, and, interestingly, states the following:
'...there are striking parallels between creolization as described by Hymes... and what happens in the later stages of koineization. A wider definition of creolization might be applicable to both pidgins and koines in their later stages of development: expansion of content, admixture, extension of use, and nativization of a new, reduced, mixed variety of language which resulted from language contact. But, like Hymes, I will leave this question open to debate (my emphasis, K.J.)' (372).
Particularly the last emphasized sentence is worth noting; the debate will doubtless continue!

Interestingly, at a conference a speaker has made a reference to an article in the Sociolinguistic Newsletter where the question was posed of how far sociolinguistics has advanced since its conception. The answer in the article was reported to have been: 'Not much, or not at all; there are still terminological disputes'. It is my conjecture that the terminological disputes in question spring, among other things, from the belief held by many linguists that 'what-is'-questions make sense. As I think otherwise, as illustrated above, I wish to claim that 'what-is'-questions, such as 'what is actually communicative competence?' do not create a difficult problem. They do not in fact create a problem at all! They simply should not be asked (unless they imply asking for a theoretical definition which is supposed to clarify the stating of a problem; e.g., 'How do you, more or less, define context?').

We may want to pause for a moment at Popper's reference to empty verbalism and the Aristotelian method of definition (cf. above). That reference should be viewed against the report on the article from *Sociolinguistic Newsletter* , mentioned above. It may be that many sociolinguists find themselves unable to liberate themselves from the vicious circle of definitions, and that fact may actually be the reason why some claim (as does the author of the article in *Sociolinguistic Newsletter*) that sociolinguistics has not advanced much, or not at all[5].

In order to better support the claim that essentialism creeps into the work of many sociolinguists, I would like to look in some detail at a recent introductory textbook in sociolinguistics (Wardhaugh 1986), and briefly at some other written sources. As Wardhaugh's book is a classical introduction, with references to many authors, it is sometimes difficult to say whether an opinion expressed in the book is Wardhaugh's, some other author's and shared by Wardhaugh, or some other author's and not shared by Wardhaugh. In fact, a decision concerning these three possibilities is not really important at all for my purposes because it is not my intention here to criticise any one author's views but to show the reader that my charges pertaining to the essentialist thinking on the part of many (socio)linguists are not unjustified or concocted.

The salience of essentialism is evident in:
'Following Chomsky's example, many linguists have argued that you should not study a language in use or even how the language is learned without first acquiring an adequate knowledge of *what language itself is*. In this view linguistic investigations should focus on developing this latter knowledge. The linguist's task should be to write grammars to develop our understanding of language: *what it is*... (my emphasis, K.J.)' (Wardhaugh 1986:6).
'While sociolinguists have talked at length, however, about communicative competence, attempts to specify *just what it is* (my emphasis, K.J.) have not been very successful, probably because it is so complex and all-encompassing' (Wardhaugh 1986:362).

In my opinion, essentialism permeates (socio)linguistics in a number of ways. In addition to evident cases like the above, one prominent sphere where essentialism clearly comes up is that of definitions. The value that some sociolinguists impute to definitions is well illustrated by Wardhaugh's section on speech community. A note might be first made, however, of Wardhaugh's comment that it is not only the terms 'language', 'dialect', and 'variety' (which Wardhaugh discusses earlier in the book) but also 'speech community' that are difficult to define. One immediately gets the impression here that the sociolinguistic terms in question are particularly unfortunate (as they are difficult to define), as if others were not only easier to define, but perhaps ultimately definable. Accepting the difficulty that we face trying to define terms in sociolinguistics, Wardhaugh

cites a number of definitions of 'speech community' and offers some comments:
'A simple definition of a 'real' speech community is offered by Lyons (1970:326) - 'all the people who use a given language, or dialect'' (114).
'We must also acknowledge that using linguistic characteristics alone to determine what is or is not (my emphasis, K.J.) a speech community has proved so far (my emphasis, K.J.) to be quite impossible...' (114).
'For very specific sociolinguistic purposes we might want to try to draw quite narrow and extremely precise (my emphasis, K.J.) bounds around what we consider to be a speech community' (114).
This last quotation deserves a brief comment. While the first part of the sentence implies to me non-essentialist thinking (except that I think 'might want to try' should be changed to 'must try') as it encourages theoretical definitions for specific research purposes, the second part of the sentence, requiring extremely precise bounds, moves us back into essentialism. This is so because belief in extreme precision invokes undoubtedly ultimate, essentialist explanation.
And further, I detect essentialism in the following:
'Labov's definition of speech community: 'The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements so much as by participation in a set of shared norms...'' (115).
'Hymes (1974:47) disagrees with both Chomsky's and Bloomfield's definitions of a speech community. He claims that these simply reduce the notion of speech community to that of a language and in effect, throw out 'speech community' as a worthwhile concept. He points out that it is impossible to equate language and speech community when we lack a clear understanding of the nature of language (my emphasis, K.J.) (117)*.

Reference to Labov's definition is worth another comment. I would accept the claim that we may have doubts as to whether the following definitions imply essentialism: 'A speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech', or 'A speech repertoire is the range of linguistic varieties which speakers have at their disposal and which they use appropriately as members of their speech community'. That is, one may always claim that such definitions should be read from the right to the left (we would thus give the author the benefit of the doubt) rather than the other way round, unless other parts of the argument indicate otherwise. Thus, we may say that we do not really know whether the author of - 'A speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech' believes that this is the right, only one good definition (i.e., reads the definition from left to right), or whether he treats the definition as a theoretical statement useful for his research purposes (i.e., reads the definition from right to left). Such a liberal, double possibility reading is, however, highly unlikely in the case of Labov's definition (cf. above), where one definition is argued for in view of others, without any external problem to the solving of which one definition and not another is thought to be better. Labov's formulation implies to me that some one definition is better or worse than others in some absolute sense, and this is precisely where essentialism emerges again (cf. Hudson 1980 for support, and Romaine 1982 on Labov's attempts at being definitely right).

In my understanding, one can speak of essentialism also whenever the opinion is voiced that some one concept (or a set of concepts) is difficult to define, the implication of which is that others are not difficult to define, and that we are particularly unlucky to be involved in a discipline with that kind of difficulty. 'For example, we cannot adequately define either 'language' or 'dialect', nor can we infallibly (my emphasis, K.J.) distinguish the one from the other' (Wardhaugh 1986:362), or
'Solche Textproben zeigen, dass Soziolinguistik und Sprachsoziologie weder vom Begriff noch vom Gegenstand und der gegenseitigen Abgrenzung her eindeutig zu bestimmen sind... Die Schwierigkeit der Begriffbestimmung mag daher rühren dass sich eine grosse Zahl wissenschaftlicher Teildisziplinen um denselben Forschungsgegenstand gruppieren' (Löffler 1985:22). And,
'We have seen that 'speech community' may be an impossibly difficult concept to define. But in attempting to do so, we have also become aware that it may be just as difficult to characterize the speech of a single individual. Perhaps that second failure follows inevitably from the first' (Wardhaugh 1986:125).

The question thus seems to be, if one follows the reasoning above, that once we have located the culprit (i.e., the concept that is easy to define, or ultimately definable) we may liberate ourselves of the present difficulty. The reasoning in other words is the following: It is difficult to define 'speech community' because it is difficult to define 'language'; and it is difficult to define 'language' because it is difficult to define 'social group', etc. And the moment when one of those 'difficult cases' turns into an 'easy one', our predicament may be brought to an end. That is how I think the essentialist reasons, and that is why he is caught up in a web of endless verbal quibbles, because the moment for the 'difficult' to turn into the 'easy' never comes.

It was mentioned above that the formulation of many definitions in sociolinguistics may give the impression that the author of the definition is an essentialist (e.g., 'a speech community is a group of people interacting by means of speech') while in fact he might not be one at all. I will call such cases 'apparent essentialism'. Definitions formulated in the left to the right fashion are, however, not the only source of such possibly unjust essentialism assignment. Other sources include:
(1) Formulations including the notion of 'proving', e.g., 'The most valid conclusion concerning the Whorfian hypothesis

is that it is quite unproved (my emphasis, K.J.) (Wardhaugh 1986:218).

When reflecting upon formulations such as the one above, it is difficult to say whether 'proving' is used here technically (implying positive knowledge and ultimate explanation) or informally, without the implication in question.

(2) Formulations concerning the difficulties of making distinctions, e.g.,

'We might also say that certain attempts to distinguish people who are bilingual from those who are bidialectal may (my emphasis, K.J.) fail' (Wardhaugh 1986:95).

At least one possible reading of the quoted sentence is that while some attempts may fail to make the distinction in question, others may succeed, which further reads that in principle it is possible to tell who is (what-is-a-) bidialectal person, or who is a bilingual person. Continuing that reasoning, it would be further claimed I think that we are now unable to clearly state the difference between the two, but one day we are going to be able to do so. This brings me to (3).

(3) Formulations where the 'we are unable now but will be able in the future' stance is expressed explicitly, e.g.,

'Ob das Niederländische ein deutscher Dialekt oder überhaupt zum Deutschen zu zählen sei...oder ob im Elsass deutsch gesprochen wird, ist damit noch nicht geklärt (my emphasis, K.J.)' (Löffler 1985:60).

Needless to say, in order to clarify that question we would first need to answer the questions of what 'das Niederländische' is, of what 'dialect' is, of what 'Deutsch' is, and possibly others. Is the author of the above question an essentialist? The noch nicht component makes me suppose so. Here, again, similarly to (2) above, the reasoning is, I think, that that question is answerable in some absolute sense, and that it will be answered in the future.

(4) Existential formulations of the following kind:

'Is there really such an entity as the 'middle middle class?'' (Wardhaugh 1986:143).

One reading of this question is the essentialist reading: 'Does middle middle class exist as a group of people clearly distinct from other groups, such as for instance upper class?'. If we are ready to give the author the benefit of the doubt, then the reading could be: 'Is it justifiable, from the point of view of the problem that we are trying to solve, to distinguish middle middle class as a theoretical category?'.

Incidentally, it has been suggested to me by Edmondson (personal communication) that perhaps my detecting essentialism in an author's text is a function of the author's style (such as using left-to-right definitions, e.g., 'language is...'), and does not at all follow from his/her philosophical commitment to ultimate definitions. While this may in fact sometimes be true (particularly in those cases which I call 'apparent essentialism cases'), I feel convinced that in the overwhelming majority of the cases that I have studied the matter is not merely stylistic. Usually there is more evidence in one author's text (beyond the evidence quoted here) which suggests essentialism. I have not included those other parts of texts here for space limits. Interestingly, in some cases I have been able to confront an author's oral statement with his written work, and both have given evidence for the author's essentialist thinking.

I repeat that (1) through (4) above as well as definition formulations either reflect the author's essentialist thinking or induce the reader to think that the author is an essentialist. While in individual cases the outside critic is unable to say whether the former or the latter is true, the wrong-doing is there. In Part III of this paper, I give a number of suggestions as to how 'apparent essentialism' could be avoided.

Before giving those suggestions, however, I wish to provide some more quotations in support of my claim on the existence of essentialism in sociolinguistics. The reader who may still remain unconvinced about the legitimacy of this claim is requested to make note of the following:
'The concept of 'diglossia' has been applied, with varying degrees of conviction, to several types of speech community, and it is now taken for granted that the label should be part of any attempt at typological classification of sociolinguistic situations. This has led in many cases to confusion rather than clarification, and to much tortured debate about the precise meaning of diglossia and what really constitutes a diglossic situation (my emphasis, K.J.)' (Winford 1985:345).
'Tanzania's linguistic composition is complex, for there are today over one hundred vernacular language groups. This is, however, only a rough estimate, since little analysis has been done as to what objectively constitutes a dialect, and what a language (my emphasis, K.J.)' (Zuengler 1985:242).
'Was ist Deutsch? (my emphasis, K.J.) und 'Wer spricht deutsch?' sind also vorzügliche Themen einer germanischen Soziolinguistik (vgl. Steger 1980:349)' (Löffler 1985:59). And,
'What would help the sociolinguist most in his work would be if he could identify some kind of natural speech community with reference to which he could make all his generalizations, and much of sociolinguistics has in fact been carried out on the assumption that this is possible! (my emphasis and interjection, K.J.)' (Hudson 1980:29). And,
'Few problems continue to generate so much endeavor and so much conflict as the problem of style. Even conferences are called to attempt to answer the questions: 'What is style? (my emphasis, K.J.), how can we study it? ... Marozean began by admitting that the question of style is as open today as it was two millennia ago. Some progress was made in the nineteenth century when scholars began 'traiter de style comme une object de science', but consequently the question of what style is (my emphasis, K.J.) became more pressing' (Gray 1969:7-8)[7].

PART III

It has been my task in some of the preceding paragraphs to show that the existence of essentialism in sociolinguistics is not the result of my concoction or fantasy. As mentioned above, some arguments and discussions leave little doubt that we deal with essentialist reasoning. It is also mentioned above that, in addition to those fairly clear cases, there is some evidence in the literature (as well as in the spoken discourse around us, in fact) pointing to what I call 'apparent essentialism'. Those are the cases where one can easily infer essentialism, but where at the same time, given the benefit of the doubt, imputing essentialism may perhaps be unfair. To all the authors fitting in that category, I would like to suggest the following:

(1) Give definitions that connote the right-to-the-left orientation (cf. p. 2), 'The study of language in relation to society *is called* sociolinguistics' (or, something like: 'I suggest that we call the study of language in relation to society sociolinguistics'), rather than the left-to-the-right orientation, as in, for example, 'Sociolinguistics *is* the study of language in relation to society'.

(2) Do not use the term 'proving' in philosophically and methodologically sensitive contexts because to the philosophically interested reader or listener 'proving' suggests final, positive knowledge, certainty, precision, and ultimate explanation, i.e., essentialism.

(3) Do not give the impression that it is only those concepts that *you* deal with that are difficult to define whereas many others, or most others do not really create a problem. Clearly, the impression in question should not be given because no one concept can be precisely or ultimately defined. Similarly, do not give the impression that some concept or a given set of concepts have not been 'explicated' *so far* because researchers have simply been unable to explicate them as yet. If necessary in the context of some problem solving, the reader should always be told point-blank that an 'explicated' or 'precise' concept is only a phantom.

Similarly, do not give the reader or listener the impression that the fuzziness that you refer to is something extraordinary, or perhaps endemic to the phenomenon of your concern. Again, if necessary in the context of some problem-solving, the reader should be told explicitly that fuzziness is everywhere to be found; this is in spite of the fact that the degree of fuzziness may vary significantly (i.e., from very close to discrete to extremely fuzzy) depending on the phenomenon tackled.

In view of what was said in PART I of this paper, it should become evident to the reader by now that essentialist sociolinguistics is untenable and ought to be abandoned. It appears that numerous attempts to unequivocally define such notions as 'speech community', 'style', 'sociolect', 'dialect', and very many others, have not produced any successful results. In connection with that, precision, or exactness in general, turned out to be an unattainable goal. Clearly, the result in question is not at all a function of the complexity, specificity, unique nature of the discipline, or any inherent intricacy of the concepts that the discipline makes use of. On the contrary, our brief discussion in the first part of this paper indicates that essentialist thinking pertaining to any discipline will bring about results comparable to those of essentialist sociolinguistics.

## NOTES

* I wish to thank the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which sponsored my research during the academic year 1986/87. The present paper is the result of a part of this research.

[1]. The question of definitions as helping clarify problems is important especially in the context of Popper's general argument, present in all his writings, intended to downplay the significance of definitions. Popper is unappreciative of the function of definitions in science unless some (and obviously never ultimate, precise, unambiguous) definition may help clarify the problem into which research is attempted. In his philosophy of science, Popper attributes utmost value to explicit formulation of problems, and he views definitions as valuable only to the extent that they contribute to that problem formulation.

[2]. Korzybski published his famous book *Science and Sanity* in 1933; Popper's first original German edition of *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (where he first mentioned 'essentialism') appeared in 1934. In neither of the books do we find any trace of influence of one author upon the other.

[3]. For more detailed analysis of the relationship between Popper, General Semanticists, some aspects of Cognitive, Prototype-oriented linguistics, and sociolinguistics, see Janicki in preparation.

[4]. The way all these questions have been asked (whenever I heard such questions asked) indicates to me quite unequivocally that they were questions asking for the real, natural, the one good definition. I came to this conclusion on the basis of the context of these questions in the discussion, including paralinguistic phenomena.

[5]. Certainly, looking for the right, 'this one proper' definition has been the practice not only in the area of sociolinguistics. The whole of linguistics has always been flooded with definitions (which, though for different reasons, is perhaps best illustrated in Grucza 1983), and that may actually have been one of the reasons why the whole of linguistics, whatever orientation one may think of, has not produced so far any remarkable research results.

[6]. The underlined part of the sentence translates to me into 'when we do not know what language really is'.

7. Interestingly, Gray adds:
"Regardless of the amount of effort, money, and time expended on the problem [of establishing what style is] results curiously fail to materialize' (Gray 1969:8).

## REFERENCES

Aristotle (1983) *Metafizyka* Translated by Kazimierz Leśniak. Warszawa Polish Scientific Publishers

Gray,B (1969) *Style. The problem and its solution* The Hague Mouton

Hudson,R (1980) *Sociolinguistics* Cambridge Cambridge University Press

Janicki,K *Toward non-essentialist sociolinguistics* In preparation

Johnson,M (1987) *The body in the mind* Chicago University of Chicago Press

Korzybski,A (1933)*Science and sanity* An introduction to non-Aristotelian systems and general semantics Garden City, N.Y. Country Life Press

Lakoff,G (1987) *Women, fire and dangerous things* Chicago University of Chicago Press

Lakoff,G and M Johnson (1980) *The metaphors we live by* Chicago University of Chicago Press

Löffler,H (1985) *Germanische Soziolinguistik* Frankfurt Erich Schmidt Verlag

Popper,K (1945) *The open society and its enemies* Vol. 2 London Routledge

Popper,K (1957) *The poverty of historicism* London Routledge and Kegan Paul

Popper,K (1959) *The logic of scientific discovery* London Hutchinson

Popper,K (1972) *Objective knowledge* Oxford Clarendon Press

Romaine,S (1982) *Historical sociolinguistics* Cambridge Cambridge University Press

Siegel,J (1985) 'Koines and koineization' *Language in Society* 14: 357-378

Wardhaugh,R (1986) *Introduction to sociolinguistics* Oxford Blackwell

Winford,D (1985) 'The concept of "diglossia" in Caribbean creole situations' *Language in Society* 14: 345-356

Wolfson,N and J Manes (1985) *Language of inequality* Berlin Mouton

Zuengler,J (1985) 'English, Swahili, or other languages? The relationship of educational development goals to language of instruction in Kenya and Tanzania' In: Wolfson,N and J Manes 241-254

# THE EVALUATION OF PHONOLOGICAL VS. PHONETIC VARIATION IN DUTCH STANDARD PRONUNCIATION*

Uus Knops
(University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands)

## 1. Introduction

It is generally known that there is a rather great discrepancy between normative and empirical views on Dutch standard pronunciation. From a *normative* point of view Dutch standard pronunciation is envisioned as a point, i.e. as a variety with no variation between forms. It is identified by linguists and recorded in pronunciation dictionaries (e.g., De Coninck 1976, Paardekooper 1978), but it is more a construct or something postulated than something real. Yet in the Dutch speech community there are some people who are considered to be pretty close to it. From an *empirical* point of view Dutch standard pronunciation is a range. It is the set of pronunciation features, including a lot of variation, that is recognized and accepted as standard by the Dutch speaking population.

The discrepancy between these two points of view - though not at all typical of or exclusive to the Dutch language area - can be reduced by looking at the empirical range as being structured from out an imagined point of reference, or a final model. The prescriptive standard then has an empirical reality as far as it plays a role as the ultimate model towards which the submodels for standard pronunciation are oriented (cf. Bartsch 1985).

An investigation was set up to get some more insight into the range of segmental features that is recognized and accepted as standard by the Dutch speaking population. More precisely, it was examined whether segmental deviations from Dutch standard pronunciation affect listeners' evaluative reactions to speakers according to the nature or quality of these deviations.

Numerous studies where speakers of standard and accented speech have been judged comparatively have shown that standard speakers are typically evaluated more favourably on traits relating to social status (e.g., status, succes, wealth) and competence (e.g., intelligence, confidence, ambition). For instance, in the Anglophone world Received Pronunciation is evaluated most favourably, not only in Britain (Giles and Powesland 1975), but also in Australia (Ball 1983), New Zealand (Huygens and Vaughan 1983) and the United States (Stewart, Ryan and Giles 1985).

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 179-190
© the author

In some cultural contexts nonstandard accents, though on the whole endowed with less prestige than the standard pronunciation model, have shown further evaluative differentiations along a status hierarchy. This status hierarchy seems to be due to more or less favourable stereotypes of various ethnic accents on an evaluative hierarchy (e.g., Berry, Kalin and Taylor 1977) or to different associations linked with more or less industrialized regions within a linguistic community (e.g., Giles 1970). It may, however, also be due to degree of accent. For instance, in the context of Spanish-English bilingualism in the United States Ryan, Carranza and Moffie (1977) found that degree of accent correlated negatively with listeners' judgements on speakers' status and solidarity. Also Giles (1972) found a considerable influence of degree of accent on the evaluation of the aesthetic and communicative value as well as the social prestige of speakers from different regions in Britain.

Since degree of accent, defined as the quantity of segmental features realized in a way divergent from standard pronunciation, affects the evaluative reactions to speakers, one might ask whether the nature or quality of segmental features deviant from standard pronunciation influences the evaluative content of reactions to speakers as well. In the before-mentioned study by Giles (1972) judgements clearly varied with accents' broadness, but the way in which the judgements changed differed both across accents and across judges. As far as could be verified no investigator in the field of language attitude research has tried to describe the precise effect of short-term characteristics of a segmental nature upon attitudes towards different groups of speakers. This is the more strange, considering that language varieties, like accent or dialect, are usually defined in terms of different realizations of segmental features like consonant and vowel phonemes (cf. Abercrombie 1977, Laver and Trudgill 1979, Wells 1970).

According to Laver and Trudgill (1979) there are four major ways in which accents may deviate on a segmental level from the standard pronunciation model. The first two concern deviations of phonological resources. An accent may differ from standard pronunciation either in having a different phonemic soundsystem, or in allowing different structural types of phonemic sequences. The first type is called a systemic deviation and the second type a structural one. The third type is termed a selectional deviation. It concerns the way in which otherwise systemically and structurally identical resources are lexically distributed, by choosing different phonemes for the pronunciation of a given word. The fourth major type of deviation from standard pronunciation is a purely phonetic matter. It concerns the way of how particular phonemes are actually pronounced. Deviations of this last type are called realizational (cf. Wells 1970, Abercrombie 1977).

Considering the first, second and fourth type of deviations, one might hypothesize that phonological deviations from standard pronunciation are perceptually more striking and evaluated less positively than purely phonetic deviations. The reason why is that deviations of the first and second type cause a larger dissimilarity, i.e. a larger linguistic distance to the standard pronunciation model than deviations of the fourth type. If the prescriptive standard pronunciation norm plays a role, then similarity to forms of this final model should decide about correctness and less so similarity to forms that are more peripheral within the standard range.

Testing these hypotheses cannot be easily done within the paradigm typical of language attitude studies in the matched- and verbal-guise tradition. In these studies stimulus materials usually consist of speech fragments produced by mono- or bilingual speakers using different languages or language varieties. Judges are asked to evaluate the speakers of those varieties on a number of personality traits and these evaluations are then taken to be language attitudes. Hence these studies provide insight into the attitudes towards different groups of speakers marked off by their language. However, one does not get insight into the evaluation of the linguistic stimuli themselves, nor can anything be said about direct links between phonetic and phonological features on the one hand and evaluative reactions towards speakers on the other hand.

Language attitude studies in a more sociolinguistic tradition have concentrated more on the evaluation of short-term segmental features. For instance, in the subjective reaction tests of Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1972) stimuli consisting of isolated words and differing in the realization of only one phonological variable a time are presented to judges with the request to indicate the variants they consider correct or that correspond to their own use. These studies - contrary to those conducted within social psychological and communication traditions - give precise information about the evaluation of segmental phonetic and phonological features. However, neither the presentation of words in isolated forms, nor the kinds of reactions elicited in connection with these forms permits one to generalize to more realistic communicative situations where attitudes towards speakers are usually formed on the basis of larger fragments of running speech (cf. Knops 1988b).

In the research presented here, set up to examine the relative effect on language attitudes of phonological and phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation, both the social psychological and sociolinguistic paradigms were combined into one. This leads to a design where normal fragments of running speech and isolated word forms originating from these fragments constitute the stimulus materials; the evaluative reactions elicited in connection with these stimuli pertain to characteristics of the speech as well as the speakers. It must then be possible to get insight into the particular segmental features that play a determining role in the language evaluation process and to examine the relative effect on the evaluation of phonological vs. phonetic deviations from the standard pronunciation model. Further consequences of the design are that the relation between the evaluation of decontextualized words and larger fragments of running speech can be examined as well as the relation between the evaluation of speech and personality traits. Since the results concerning these latter relations have been extensively dealt with elsewhere, they will not be of central concern here. The interested reader is referred to Knops (1988a,b,c) for more detailed information concerning these topics.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Stimulus materials

A ca. 30 sec. fragment of neutral prose was read on tape by seven speakers, two of which could be characterized as standard speakers (one speaker being a Dutchman, the other a Fleming). The remaining five speakers all had a regional accent, typical of various regions in the Netherlands and in Flanders. Two speakers came from what is regarded as the socio-economic centre of the Netherlands and of Flanders respectively (the Dutchman had a North-Holland accent, The Fleming a Brabant accent). Two other speakers had a regional accent typical of the southern periphery of the Netherlands (a North-Brabant and a Limburg accent). The last speaker had a West-Flemish accent, characteristic of the western periphery of Flanders. In all, there were four Dutch and three Flemish speakers. All of them were male, they had the same professions and were 30 to 35 years old.

Considerable attention was paid to reading tempo and fluency. Different recordings were made of each speaker so that the final versions could be matched for speech rate and reading fluency. The texts read aloud by the different speakers were presented as a whole to different judges. This procedure corresponds to the manner of presentation in social psychological language attitude research, where judges are normally confronted with stimuli containing fragments of running speech that represent different speech varieties.

From each of the seven fragments 15 words were isolated with the help of a porting system. The 15 words were the same for each speaker and represented approximately 25% of the reading fragments. In order not to disturb the intelligibility of these words when presented in isolation, only words with a primary or secondary sentence accent were selected and all except for two were polysyllabic. The 105 isolated words contained 27 different kinds of deviations from standard pronunciation, 15 of which could be characterized as phonological, the remaining 12 as phonetic. The exact nature of these phonological and phonetic deviations can be deduced from table 1. This table also contains information about the distribution of deviations over linguistic varieties and lexical items. Inspection of the table reveals that the same kind of deviation could occur in the speech of more than one speaker as well as in more than one decontextualized word of the same speaker. The total number of deviations therefore amounts to 94, 38 of which are phonological and 56 phonetic.

The isolated words were presented to the judges as well. This manner of presentation corresponds to sociolinguistically oriented language attitude research except for one major difference: the words were not spoken in isolation, but decontextualized from the speech fragments. A comparison of both conditions reveals the relation between the more global evaluative reactions towards speech fragments on the one hand and the more specific reactions towards particular speech characteristics on the other hand.

Table 1
Phonological and phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation: distribution over lexical items and linguistic varieties

| Phonological deviations | lexical items | variety | number of occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. v - f | vader, volkomen, vallen, wrevelig | NS, NH, BB, BW | 8 |
| 2. vr - ʋr | wrevelig | NS | 1 |
| 3. ər - ɐ | vader | NS, NH | 2 |
| 4. ər - ə | moeder | BB | 1 |
| 5. u - u. | moeder | NB, NL, BS, BB, BW | 5 |
| 6. vər - fʀ | verhaal | NL | 1 |
| 7. vəl - vl | wrevelig | BS, BB | 2 |
| 8. lᵊf - ləf | half | NH, NL, BB | 3 |
| 9. lᵊf - lv | half | NB | 1 |
| 10. h - Ø* | verhaal, half | NB, NL, BB | 5 |
| 11. h - ɣ | verhaal | BW | 1 |
| 12. ɪ - e | prins | BW | 1 |
| 13. ə - ən | vallen, buiten | NL | 2 |
| 14. əχ - ɪχ | wrevelig | NB, NL, BB, BW | 4 |
| 15. ʃ - stj | kastje | BS | 1 |
| Phonetic deviations | | | |
| 1. o. - ɔu | bioscoop, volkomen | NS, NH, NB | 5 |
| 2. o: - ɔu | toren | NS, NB | 2 |
| 3. ʌy - œ. | thuiskwam, buiten | NS, NH, NB, BB, BW | 8 |
| 4. ʌy - ɒu | buiten | NH | 1 |
| 5. a. - ɑ. | vader, verhaal | NH, NB, BB, BW | 6 |
| 6. r - ʀ | vader, moeder, prins, toren, verhaal | NH, NB, NL BW | 13 |
| 7. r - ɹ | moeder, verhaal | NS | 2 |
| 8. ø. - ø.˔ | keuken | BB | 1 |
| 9. ø. - ø.˕ | keuken | NH, NB, BS | 3 |
| 10. ɑ - a | kastje, vallen half | NH, NB, NL BS, BB, BW | 10 |
| 11. e. - ei | wrevelig, weten | NH, BS | 4 |
| 12. ɪ - ɪ̈ | prins | NB | 1 |

* Ø in this case means omission

NS : Dutch standard
NH: North-Holland accent
NB: North-Brabant accent
NL: Limburg accent

BS : Belgian standard
BB : Brabant accent
BW : West-Flemisch

## 2.2. Evaluation instrument

An evaluation instrument was constructed containing semantic differential scales with five scale positions and two antonymic adjectives at the end of each scale. Two kinds of adjectives were used: adjectives designed for the evaluation of a speaker's speech (speech scales) and adjectives designed for the valuation of the speaker as a person (personality scales).

The speech scales were selected on the basis of a preliminary investigation conducted in 1985 in Nijmegen (cf. Knops 1988a). These scales were: the pronunciation is clear - unclear; pure - not pure; beautiful - ugly; cultivated - uncultivated; pleasant - unpleasant; careful - sloppy and natural - unnatural.

The personality scales were gathered on the basis of the literature pertaining to speakers' evaluation. The following seven scales were used: the speaker is intellligent - unintelligent; congenial - uncongenial; modest - arrogant; confident - unsure; friendly - unfriendly; reliable - unreliable and respectful - disrespectful.

## 2.3. Subjects

Subjects were five groups of about 50 students, originating from the same areas as the accented speakers used in this study: thus, they were natives of North-Holland, North-Brabant and Limburg in the Netherlands and of Brabant and West-Flanders in Belgium. 123 of the 251 volunteers were male (49%), the remaining 128 were female (51%). The age of the respondents varied from 17 to 29. All students were paid for their participation in the experiments.

Differences related to sex, age and regional background of the subjects will not be dealt with in this article. Here, only general results pertaining to the questions posed in the introduction will be discussed.

## 2.4. Procedure

The investigation was conducted at four different universities (Nijmegen, Amsterdam, Louvain and Kortrijk) and in different sessions with 18 to 50 students a time. Participants received a scale-booklet at their arrival in the language laboratory of each university. Then the experiment conductor explained the aims of the investigation and how to fill in the semantic differential scales. When the taperecorder was started, each student listened to the tape through a head-phone. The tape consisted of two parts. The first part contained the isolated words produced by the seven different speakers. Each word was repeated five times and followed by a short pause, so as to provide enough time to fill in the scales. Different words were separated by peep-tones. The second part consisted of the fragments of prose read aloud by the seven speakers. During the investigation several short pauses were inserted as breathing-spaces. When the end of the tape was reached the students were asked to fill in a short questionnaire providing the investigator with some identity data. The whole procedure lasted for about 90 minutes.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. The perceptual salience of deviations from standard pronunciation

Examination of the relation between the speech and personality scales revealed that a two-dimensional model (obtained through principal components analysis with varimax rotation) best described the relations among the various scales. The first dimension of this model was formed by personality scales referring to the social and intellectual status of speakers ('confident - unsure'; 'intelligent - unintelligent') and speech scales referring to traditional prescriptive norms for good or correct articulation ('clear - unclear'; 'cultivated - uncultivated'; 'careful - sloppy'; 'pure - not pure'). The second dimension was formed by personality traits that display raters' concern for speakers' social attractiveness ('congenial - uncongenial'; 'friendly - unfriendly'; 'reliable - unreliable') and speech scales that refer to the naturalness and aesthetic qualities of speech ('beautiful - ugly'; 'natural - unnatural'). Two personality scales ('modest - arrogant' and 'respectful - disrespectful') did not fit into this model and were left out of further consideration.

Further analysis of the data was restricted to the first evaluative dimension (the 'status dimension'), because it best reflects the normative, prescriptive views of Dutch and Flemish judges on Netherlandic standard pronunciation. Other considerations that prompted this restriction were the fact that accent differences of a segmental nature have proved to be more salient in eliciting judgements on a status dimension (e.g., Ryan, Carranza and Moffie 1977) and the outcome that on the solidarity dimension the evaluative differences between the various speakers did not reach the level of significance.

In examining the question whether phonological deviations from standard pronunciation have more perceptual relevance than phonetic deviations the segmental determinants of language attitudes had to be defined. These were defined as the segmental deviations from standard pronunciation occurring in decontextualized words, the evaluations of which correlate significantly ($p < .05$) with the evaluations of the corresponding reading fragments. In table 2 the numbers of both the phonological and phonetic determinants of attitudes are given for each variety that was evaluated by the different groups of judges.

As can be seen from table 2 phonological deviations from standard pronunciation function more often as determinants of language attitudes than purely phonetic deviations. This is generally true, but not in the case of every language variety. Inspection of the determinants of the specific language varieties reveals that phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation do come into play

Table 2
Phonological versus phonetic determinants of attitudes (absolute numbers and percentages)

| | NS | | NH | | NB | | NL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| phonoligical determinants | 13 | 65% | 15 | 50% | 12 | 60% | 14 | 35% |
| phonetic determinants | 17 | 68% | 28 | 37.3% | 33 | 47.1% | 7 | 28% |

| | BS | | BB | | BW | | ALL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| phonoligical determinants | 5 | 33.3% | 14 | 35% | 12 | 48% | 85 | 44.7% |
| phonetic determinants | 8 | 40% | 6 | 24% | 13 | 32.5% | 112 | 40% |

Table 3
T-values for the differences between the mean evaluation of standard pronunciation features and the mean evaluation of phonological vs. phonetic deviations

| varieties | | North-Holland | North-Brabant | Limburg | Brabant | West-Flanders |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NS | phonological | - 9.64** | -7.00** | -5.28** | -4.13** | -7.01** |
| | phonetic | -0.77 | 1.73 | 3.54 | -2.57 | 1.14 |
| NB | phonological | -10.74** | -7.03** | -9.42** | -4.36** | -7.58** |
| | phonetic | -8.33** | -4.90** | -6.03** | -1.73 | -4.54** |
| NL | phonological | 3.91** | 2.85* | 4.50** | -4.92** | -5.01** |
| | phonetic | -0.36 | 0.57 | 0.88 | -4.44** | -3.99** |
| BS | phonological | 1.94 | 2.64* | 3.50** | 3.91** | -3.16* |
| | phonetic | 0.36 | 0.03 | 2.38* | 1.74 | -1.42 |
| BB | phonological | -6.07** | -6.50** | -7.69** | -1.96 | 1.39 |
| | phonetic | -4.65** | -5.58** | -5.72** | -0.90 | 0.03 |
| BW | phonological | -3.13* | -1.76 | -2.18* | -2.43* | -2.59* |
| | phonetic | 0.34 | 0.50 | -0.35 | -1.73 | 0.36 |

| | |
|---|---|
| - | more negative than the evaluation of standard features |
| + | more positiive than the evaluation of standard features |
| ** | $p \leq .001$ |
| * | $p \leq .05$ |

as well, notably when the Dutch and Belgian standard variety had to be judged. In fact, this is not so surprising a result, if one considers that judges will have recognized and evaluated both varieties as standard varieties. The few cases where both standard speakers deviate from the normative standard pronunciation model on a phonological level will therefore have been judged as atypical, which on its turn has resulted in low correlations between those deviations and the corresponding reading fragments. In all cases where judges had to evaluate accented varieties, phonological deviations from standard pronunciation were evaluted more in consistency with the evaluations of the corresponding varieties as compared to deviations of a phonetic kind. If one subtracts the determinants of the attitudes towards both standard speakers, then the total number of phonological determinants amounts to 67 (= 43.2%), whereas that of phonetic determinants amounts to 87 (=37%).

On the whole, the conclusion seems to be warranted that phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation have less perceptual salience as determinants of language attitudes than phonological deviations. The latter are evaluated more reliably, i.e. they show greater consistency with the evaluations of the corresponding varieties than variants of a phonetic kind. This is not to say that the distinction between phonological and phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation is the only factor determining the evaluation of accented and non-accented speech. Other factors, such as degree of accent, judges greater familiarity with certain varieties, similarity to the own substandard variety, and the difference between primary and secondary dialect features (Schirmunski 1930), might play a role as well, but the relative influence of those factors will have to be further investigated.

### 3.2. The evaluation of deviations from standard pronunciation

Secondly, the question was examined whether phonological deviations from standard pronunciation are evaluated less positively than purely phonetic deviations. Comparison of the mean evaluations of phonological vs. phonetic deviations over the different varieties however revealed that phonological deviations are not evaluated less positively than purely phonetic deviations. Further inspection of the data brought to light that the evaluations of the various segmental features might be too heterogeneous te be simply taken together. This heterogeneity is due, among other things, to the fact that each linguistic variety is represented by only one speaker. Therefore a new analysis was performed which consisted in comparing the means for the evaluation of the standard pronunciation features and the evaluation of the phonological and phonetic deviations of each language variety respectively.

In table 3 the T-values are given for the differences between the means of the evaluation of standard pronunciation features and the evaluation of phonological or phonetic deviations respectively. In most cases the T-values are negative and higher for phonological than for phonetic deviations, which means that phonological deviations were evaluated more negatively. In some cases, however, the T-values are positive, meaning that the deviations from standard pronunciation were evaluated more positively than the standard pronunciation features themselves. Here again, however, the T-values for phonological deviations are ehigher than those for phonetic deviations. The least that can be said, therefore, is that phonological deviations are evaluated more extremely, either more positively or more negatively, than purely phonetic deviations. This more extreme evaluation of phonological deviations is moreover in line with their greater perceptual relevance as segmental features typically associated with a particular language variety.

Thus, the direction of evaluation of segmental deviations from standard pronunciation is largely determined by the prestige of language varieties associated with those deviations. The prestige of a language variety will largely be due to extralinguistic factors and may differ from group to group. The distinction between phonological and phonetic deviations does however play a role in that phonological deviations from standard pronunciation get more extreme evaluations than phonetic deviations in either a positive or negative way. This means that segmental features do play distinct roles in language attitudes according to their nature.

## 4. Conclusions

The main objective of this study, to examine the way in which the nature or quality of segmental deviations from standard pronunciation affect listeners' evaluative reactions to speakers, has led to a design that reconciles both sociolinguistic and social psychological approaches in language attitude research. With this design it was possible to indicate some segmental features that may have played a role in eliciting attitudes towards different varieties of Dutch. This allows the conclusion that the evaluation of language varieties is partly determined by differences involving realizations of consonant and vowel phonemes. The distinction between phonological and phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation was shown to be a factor determining the relative influence exerted by segmental features. Phonological deviations from standard pronunciation turned out to be more important in determining language attitudes than phonetic deviations. In line with the greater perceptual salience was the further finding that phonological deviations are evaluated more extremely than purely phonetic deviations. The initial hypothesis that phonological deviations are evaluated less positively could not be confirmed, since the evaluation of segmental deviations from standard pronunciation is largely determined by the prestige of language varieties associated with those deviations. The distinction between both kinds of deviations does however play a role in that phonological deviations from standard pronunciation get more extreme evaluations than phonetic deviations in either a positive or negative way. This means that segmental features do play distinct roles in language attitudes according to their nature, a result that would not have been found if the search for a way of combining social psychological and sociolinguistic approaches in the study of language attitudes had not been undertaken. It can therefore be concluded that the reconciliation of both designs has proved useful in finding out something about the intricate interplay of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in language evaluation.

Future studies might consider the possibility of controlling for extra- and paralinguistic factors such as voice quality and prosodic features. These may have affected the evaluations in this study, but then one has to remember that it is almost impossible to find speakers who are able to imitate various ethnic and regional accents in a natural and convincing way. Also, the number of deviations from standard pronunciation, i.e. degree of accent, should ideally be more constant across speakers or varieties than was the case in this study. But then again, one has to consider the fact that degree and quality of accent may be intricately interlinked in natural situations. Finally, future research will have to find out whether the distinction between consonant and vowel phonemes is more important in determining the perceptual salience of accent features than the distinction between phonological and phonetic deviations from standard pronunciation.

## Note

*The research was made possible through a grant of the Netherlands organization for the advancement of pure research (NWO).

## References

Abercrombie, D. (1977) 'The accents of standard English in Scotland.' Work in Progress. University of Edinburgh. Department of Linguistics 10: 21-32.

Ball, P. (1983) 'Stereotypes of Anglo-Saxon and Non Anglo-Saxon accents: Some expalanatory Australian studies with the matched guise technique.' Language Sciences 5: 163-184.

Bartsch, R. (1985) Sprachnormen. Theorie und Praxis. Niemeyer, TÜbingen.

Berry, J.W., R. Kalin and D. M. Taylor (1977) Multiculturalism and ethnic attitudes in Canada. Minister of Supply and Services of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

De Coninck, R.H.B. (1976) Groot uitspraakwoordenboek van de Nederlandse taal. De Sikkel, Antwerpen.

Giles, H. (1970) 'Evaluational reactions to accents.' Educational Review 22: 211-227.

Giles, H. (1972) 'The effect of stimulus mildness-broadness in the evaluation of accents.' Language and Speech 15: 262-269.

Giles, H. and P.F. Powesland (1975) Speech style and social evaluation. Academic Press, London.

Huygens, I. and G.M. Vaughan (1983) 'Language attitudes, ethnicity and social class in New Zealand.' Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 4: 207-224.

Knops, U. (1988a) 'Oordelen over sprekers en spraak.' Mededelingen van de Nijmeegse Centrale voor Dialect- en Naamkunde XX:

Knops, U. (1988b) 'Attitudes towards regional variation in Dutch pronunciation.' In R. van Hout and U. Knops (eds.) Language attitudes in the Dutch language area. Foris, Dordrecht:

Knops, U. (1988c) 'Pronunciation norms in the Dutch language area.' Proceedings from the Fourth Biennial Conference on Netherlandic Studies, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis:

Labov, W. (1966) The social stratification of English in New York City. Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington D.C.

Laver, J. and P. Trudgill (1979) 'Phonetic and linguistic markers in speech.' In K.R. Scherer and H. Giles (eds.) Social markers in speech, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1-32.

Paardekooper, P. (1978) ABN-uitspraakgids. Heideland-Orbis, Hasselt.

Ryan, E.B., M. Carranza and R.W. Moffie (1977) 'Reactions towards varying degrees of accentedness in the speech of Spanish-English bilinguals.' Language and Speech 20: 267-273.

Schirmunski, V. (1930) Sprachgeschichte und Siedelungsmundarten. Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift 18, 113-122.

Stewart, M.A., E.B. Ryan and H. Giles (1985) 'Accent and social class effects on status and solidarity evaluations.' Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 11: 98-105.

Trudgill, P. (1972) 'Sex, covert prestige and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich.' Language in Society 1: 179-195.

Wells, J.C. (1970) 'Local accents in England and Wales.' Journal of Linguistics 6: 231-252.

# QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS INTO WORKING-CLASS LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

Caroline Macafee
Edinburgh

Perhaps because of its pursuit of scientific credibility, sociolinguistics often produces results first, and looks later for applications or areas of wider interest to which sociolinguistic findings can be attached. Basic sociological concepts, such as socioeconomic stratification and social networks, are built into the research design, and provide apparently reliable categories. But the findings may then turn out to have significance in terms of more complex issues such as sex roles, self-image or self-conciousness about speech. Since topics of this kind were not directly under investigation, the researchers fall back on common-sense. *Post hoc*, common sense, interpretations of speakers' motives can be, and have been, biased by researchers' own class- or gender-centred worldviews. For instance, attempts to describe the speech of women in terms of its deviation from a male norm have been criticised by Cameron (1985) and Spender (1980). Reah (1982) criticises the assumption underlying Labov's (1972) explanation of stylistic variation in speech (that more self-conscious styles are the same as more standard styles) since speakers can be self-consciously *broad* in their speech.

I began my fieldwork, in an inner city area of Glasgow,[1] with a vague sense that in sociolinguistics our understanding of the working-class was pretty shallow. There has been a lack of exploratory work on the terminology of language attitudes within the working-class, and the issues that are of active concern to them. The superiority of Standard English is so fundamental a premise of English-language-medium education that it is sometimes difficult for a contradictory view to find expression - especially when the research agenda keeps niggling away at a sensitive area: the contrast in status between Standard English (middle-class) and the vernacular or non-standard English (working-class). It has become virtually an orthodoxy that the alternative ideology is not only withheld from academic researchers, but is actually inarticulate. In Trudgill's Norwich work, 'Favourable attitudes to non-standard speech are not normally expressed ... and emerge only in inaccurate self-evaluation test responses' (1972: 179). This is not the case in Lowland Scotland, certainly.[2]

No amount of ratiocination will bring us any closer to understanding how people see things, what they value, what motivates them, or what they expect from others. There is, however, a simple way to find out: ask them. The appropriate methodology for this is qualitative. I arrived at this method almost by accident. Since I was my own fieldworker, it was important to me to have at least some aspects of the research that I could discuss explicitly with my informants, for practical reasons of ease in interaction, as much as ethical ones, of treating them as authoritative sources, rather than experimental subjects.[3] I drew up a list of about one hundred Glasgow words, based on sources such as local dialect

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 191-202
© the author

literature, and preliminary interviews with older women and with children. Without my being aware of it at first, I was directed towards the agenda of an on-going debate on linguistic change among the older members of the community. The questionnaire also included the questions whether people noticed any differences in the speech of older/ younger people and in the speech of the opposite sex. Seventy-five working-class people from the East End of Glasgow answered all or part of the questionnaire in the context of small group interviews in settings such as pensioners' clubs, youth clubs, mother-and-toddler groups, workplaces and bars. The results were very rewarding. I obtained a large corpus of comment on language and social history. Subsequently, Walker, ed. (1985) became available, making it possible to place my explorations within a general intellectual framework.

Qualitative studies are becoming increasingly popular in social research, whether as a preliminary, to generate hypotheses for more narrowly-focussed quantitative work, or as ends in themselves. The essence of the qualitative method is to listen to what people have to say about a policy, situation or process that directly affects them, and to distil their comments into a manageable summary of opinion on that question. The art of qualitative research is to create situations in which people will talk freely and openly. There are often contradictions and subtleties to be discovered in 'private versions' if these can be elicited, as opposed to the stereotyped, consensual 'public version' that the community may have evolved (Cornwell, 1984).

The advantages of qualitative methods are discussed by Walker (1985). Briefly, these are:

a) qualitative research allows the discovery of unanticipated information;

b) it draws on the inside knowledge that informants have of situations in which they are involved;

c) it can handle topics that are not (or not yet) suitable for quantitative research because they are, for instance too complicated, or too subtle, or concerned with shifting phenomena such as interaction, or processes of change;

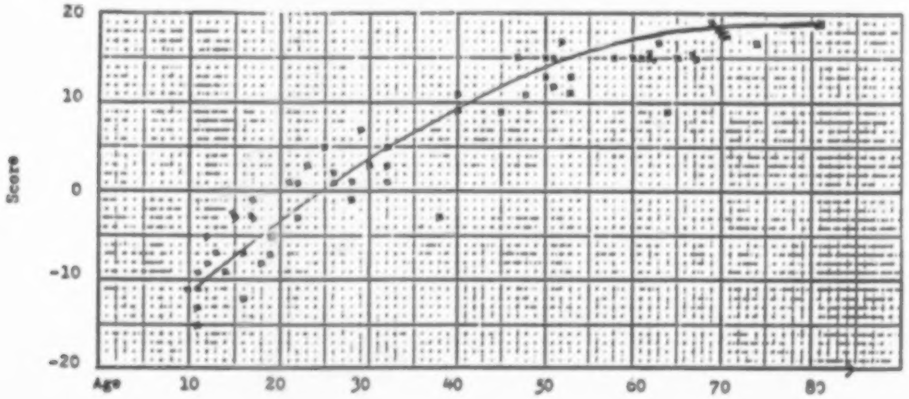
d) it makes good use of rich and varied information without being constrained to discard what does not fit a pre-conceived analytical format.

From the point of view of linguistics, the overwhelming advantage might be said to be the direct relevance of qualitative data for teleological forms of explanation, i.e. explanations in terms of goals and motives.

The research outlined here combines quantitative and qualitative elements - the tension between them proved very productive. At an early stage in sorting the data on individual words (claimed knowledge and use, with incidental comments) a contradiction became apparent. The loss of dialect lexis as my figures showed it, by age, was neither so thorough nor so abrupt as older informants represented it. Likewise, adults predicted that children would not know specific items (e.g. well 'tap', two bob 'two shillings') whereas my figures showed them to be well-known to children in the area.

In order to generalise beyond individual words, the scores of 62 informants (the number is smaller because the questionnaire was not completed with all informants) were aggregated for 19 items that were clearly declining in apparent time: tanner 'sixpence', hunch cuddy hunch (a children's game), barlay (a children's truce term), guisers (a Hallowe'en tradition), knock 'clock', waggity-wa (type of clock), poky hat 'ice cream cone' (used to children), sugarallie 'liquorice', peenie and thibbet (types of apron), hippen 'baby's nappy', brace 'mantelpiece', closet 'w.c.', pen(d) (an architectural feature), jawbox 'kitchen sink', well 'water tap', syn(d) 'rinse', the butts 'the fire engine', fernietickles 'freckles' (an endearment). This produced the fairly even curve of Figure 1.

Figure 1. Both sexes' claimed knowledge of selected words



This provided a hypothesis: that there was a generation gap of some kind in the recent linguistic history (real time) of this community. The research then proceeded along both qualitative and quantitative lines, with a focus on age differences (in variables analysed from the recordings) and on comments on age-related themes.

The initial contradiction was resolved when I took into consideration informants' comments about the question whether they used each given word in the lexical questionnaire. The over-40s (in 1984) in particular frequently offered a refinement to this, to the effect that they formerly used a word, but no longer did so. My question had not been subtle enough to detect the real difference between the older generation of adults and the younger, which lies in the difference between using words as the normal everyday terms, and using them, if at all, as a stylistically marked alternative to Standard English. Many words that were once the only terms in people's mouths appear to have largely dropped out of active use, with a consequent decline in passive knowledge of them amongst younger speakers. The older generation, having participated in this change, are particularly conscious of the demise of earlier speech habits. As one lady in her 60s remarked about the word hippen: 'Ma Da always used that word, an ma Maw, hippen. Nappy now. [use] No - no noo Ah don't, but when Ah was young, it's the only word Ah knew.'

The 'public' version, then, stereotypes the decline of Scots, but 'private' versions showed grandparents perceiving themselves to be an embarrassment. For instance, a grandfather confides:

> The whole point is, see, Caroline, Ah get - Ah cannae get sayin - see ma wee grankiddies? They [the parents] 're, 'Don't [listen tae] yer granda, that's no how ye say the thing, that's -' Ah'm gettin knoacked back. Ah'm gettin knoacked back wi sayin Scotch words.

I was struck by accounts of adults altering their language in deference to their (grand)children's education. One young mother told a young father, who claimed to use the word knock, ' You're no teachin the wean a very good lesson, are ye? The wean'll go tae school an tell the teacher it's a knoack. An she'll think ye cannae talk right.' But more than this it shows the adults at a disadvantage, and even accepting correction from the young:

> First young mother: An Ah used tae call it ginger, but the weans checked me.
> Second young mother: Ah know. They check ye an tell ye it's juice.
> Third young mother: The first thingwy Ah heard juice was actually in England. Ye know they called it juice doon there. Then Ah come in here, the weans were callin it juice. [...] His Ma was killin ersel at Desmond, 'Ah want juice!'

Older speakers who have not adjusted to changes in everyday speech can feel eccentric and out of touch. A lady in her late seventies tells the following story:

> C'mere an Ah'll tell ye a wee laugh: ma twin - ma brother an me's twins - he's ten i a family, Ah've nane, Mary - an ma other niece's daughter, she was up visitin er mother an oor Andy was in, an we just cawed im Aundra - Scoatch - but it's Andrew - [...] Ah think e'll maybe be aboot ten, Scott - e says, 'Uncle Andrew, are you French?' E says, 'Away, an don't be daft! Ah'm Brigton!' E says, 'Where's that? Is that abroad?' Fae Brigton! Jeannie - that was ma niece's daughter - hulkin brute - she says, 'But Uncle Andra, e disnae really - e talks -' They're away in Dal- somethin, ootside i Stirlin, Ah cannae mind - Ah've been there, but Ah cannae mind i it - she says, 'What is your name?' She says - e says, 'Andrew.' But why did we never caw im that? That was the Brigton folk. An we'd always say, 'Oor Aundra'. Well, the wean, e's gettin teached - learned French at school, e thoat it was a wee French name ! E's sittin, 'Ah never knew Uncle Andrew was that.' She says, 'It's Brigton.' That was just a Scoatch word for it, Aundra. For Andrew. But it just shows ye how ye can - folk thinks ye're daft.

The young, on the other hand, are perceived to be foul-mouthed. It seems to be generally agreed that standards of behaviour with regard to swearing are falling, and that many children swear freely (and often understand what they are saying as well). Until recently there was a consensus about the rules of swearing. Although they might not always be observed, they were understood to exist, and to break them was to define oneself as 'rough'. Humorous vulgarity was acceptable amongst friends and family (e.g. 'What's for dinner?' 'Sheep shite and smiddy ashes'), but 'unneccessary' obscenity was justified only by strong feeling, and never in mixed company or in front of children.

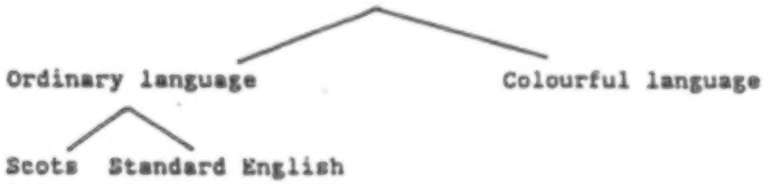
Most parents now seem unwilling to enforce their standards by battering them into their offspring, especially as the trend is a general one in the world outside. What is not sufficiently realised is that the working-class blame 'liberated' people in higher classes for setting a bad example, especially through the mass media. The following comment from a grandmother is typical:

> Well, as Ah'm sayin, they're gettin away wi it. When you hear it on that television that's what's the cause of it. [...] Don't you think that's influencin the kids tae think, 'Well, if they can say it, Ah can't [sic].' We didn't have that. We'd just our own parents' example. If our parents didn't swear, we didn't, But now they're hearin it on the air an they're comin away wi it. [...] Cos they think, 'Oh, great actress, a famous actress came away wi this word.' An as Ah say, even the royalty are comin away wi it.

Whether or not television is the culprit, this seems to indicate a dissolution of the old dividing line between roughness and respectability in behaviour.

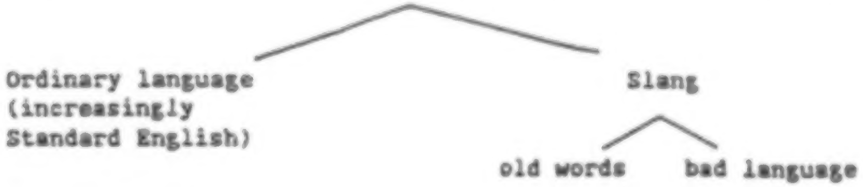
A similar blurring of pragmatic distinctions may be taking place in relation to slang. On the basis of the language labels used spontaneously in the recordings, at least some older adults (in the 46+ age group) retain the term Scotch /skotʃ/ or /skɔtʃ/ in their everyday terminology, and with it a classification of speech styles as in Figure 2. As one middle-aged man put it, 'There's two languages here: Scottish an bad language'.[4]

Figure 2. Implicit classification of Glasgow speech (older people)



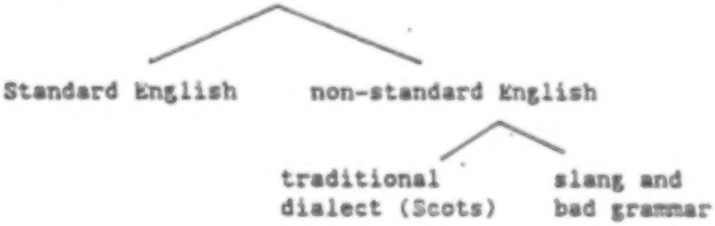
Younger speakers appear to have a different classification, as in Figure 3, in which Scots now comes within the category of slang.

Figure 3: Implicit classification of Glasgow speech (young people)



Older people sometimes use the term slang in a self-deprecating way too, but the existence of the term Scotch (or Scots from some middle-aged speakers) indicates a distinct conceptual category.[5] Younger speakers (25 and under) appear to see linguistic variation in terms more like those of the Scottish middle-class (Figure 4, and see Aitken, 1982).

Figure 4: Accepted classification of language varieties in Lowland Scotland



If the older way of talking and thinking about the vernacular is dying out, then there is a possibility that many traditional Scots words - those that have passed from active everyday use into passive knowledge and occasional use - will come to be seen as simply the colourful language of an older generation, subject to changes in fashion:

> girl: some older generations just talk the same wey as we dae, because they just pick it up. [...] So maybe aw the patter'll cheynge when we get aulder. We'll still be usin this, other people - other younger people'll be usin different ...

The usual reaction to Scots as colourful language is to find unfamiliar sayings interesting and amusing and perhaps to make a mental note of them for later mention:

> woman (early 30s): Aye - what was it noo - Ah heard this wuman sayin, an Ah was laughin. What did she say for 'rinsin'? [...] - she had this soapy waater aw left. An she went, 'Aw, that's a shame tae waste that ...' - an what did she say? It was a right auld-fashiont word. Aw, Ah cannae remember. An ah mean - sapple. 'That's a shame tae waste that sapple.' It was aw this lovely soapy waater, an she'd only waashed wan wee thing in it, an she went, 'Anythin else tae get waashed? That's a shame tae waste that sapple.' Ah thoat that was dead funny.

There is no sense that such words and forms are the correct ones (the 'right' word) to be imitated by the hearer or re-adopted into everyday use.

The change that has taken place begins to look like the generation gap as Mead describes it. Those who grew up before or during the Second World War have lived through changes so profound, rapid and global that they are, as she puts it, 'time migrants' in the modern world:

> no generation has ever known, experienced, and incorporated such rapid changes, watched the sources of power, the means of communication, the definition of humanity, the limits of the explorable universe, the certainties of a known and limited world, the fundamental imperatives of life and death - all change before our eyes. (1978: 75)

'Post-figurative' cultures - i.e. cultures in which the life experiences of adults can be taken as a model by the young - are disrupted everywhere in the world.[6] On the contrary, adults now look to young people for guidance on how to conduct themselves. The explanation often offered for no longer using a dialect word - that young people would not understand it - is very feeble, but also very telling, as it shows precisely this tendency of the older generation to model their behaviour on the young, rather than the other way round.

To the extent that the over-40s (in 1984) conform to the modern world in which they find themselves, the generation gap is concealed by a facade of unity. I examined about 52 000 words of speech from the same 62 speakers. Taking a large number of low-frequency variables in lexical incidence and morphology (covering the bulk of the dialect forms in the corpus), I found no age differences in the occurrence of Scots forms.[7] Individual Scots forms were spread over the age range, and there was a slight negative correlation of broadness of speech (crudely, the number of variables in which Scots forms were exhibited) with age.[8]

It is impossible to say what proportion of the average speaker's vocabulary the disappearing words represent. The potential vocabulary of Scots is so large (the SND has about 30 000 headwords) and loosely structured, that its decline is not readily measurable. The decline of dialect lexis has been cumulative since the onset of standardisation - in Lowland Scotland, the late sixteenth century - but declining words do not necessarily die out completely. A large proportion of the Scots vocabulary is passively known from songs, literature and historical contexts (including family lore). Even if not large numerically, the recent phase of this loss would be significant, because many of these words are very salient in living memory: they were formerly everyday words. Their disappearance is a perceptible indication of change in the consciousness of speakers, the subjective reflection of material change. Each shift away from traditional means of production shifts the vocabulary of everyday life towards Standard English. Such change is not new, but the form it takes is specific to each period of time, this century being characterised by the growth of mass production and mass markets. It is not surprising, given a qualitative input from dialect speakers themselves, that the resulting emphasis should be on the levelling or decline of dialect.

British researchers have written very pessimistically of the demise of traditional dialects. Murison considers that the dialects of the industrial areas in particular are more 'broken English' than Scots, in view of 'the general currency of standard and substandard and slang English' (1977: 56). Unfortunately, this kind of comparison between the past and the present can be invidious, undermining attempts to gain respect, or at least tolerance, especially in the educational system, for the living dialects. Others are resolutely cheerful, but their reassurances sound hollow. Upton et al. (1987: 12) quote Joseph Wright's 1898 comment that 'pure dialect speech' is rapidly disappearing. While agreeing with this, they rephrase it as 'an acceleration in the pace of dialectal change' and observe that:

> Such levelling as there has been is most evident in standardisation of grammar and in erosion of obsolescent sections of vocabulary, including, for example, many variants of older agricultural terms. This is, however, simply part of a continuing process of change, which has left regional accents relatively unscathed. (1987: 12)

Neither of these ideological positions - pessimistic valediction or optimistic propaganda - gets us any closer to understanding the cultural significance of what is going on, certainly not as far as the dialect speakers themselves are concerned.

We can presumably take the maintenance of broad dialect styles (in informal conversation in the present study) as a sign of the continuity and stability of the (lower) working-class character of the East End of Glasgow. On the other hand, the complete overhaul of the physical fabric of the area, in the context of a general abolition of poverty in the 1950s (Laslett, 1983), means that people are almost literally living in a different world, and this is reflected in lexical change.

Any specific case of language shift - whether an abrupt shift in a bilingual (including bidialectal) context or a gradual levelling of one dialect towards another - can be interpreted in terms specific to the society in which it occurs. But it is clear that there are larger forces at work - the shift is never from a world language or standardised koiné towards a minority language or non-standard dialect. This is so obvious that it may seem inevitable or almost natural. In explanation, Thelander (1980) appeals to the general idea of modern life. An isolated attempt to give substance to this idea in a sociolinguistic context is Hertzler (1966). She coins the term uniformation as the opposite of the differentiation that has traditionally been the concern of dialectologists. This is a blanket term for a range of centralising and homogenising forces in the twentieth century, which she lists in outline. It is difficult to bring such a global interpretation to bear on a small localised study. This was certainly a problem in the present research. It seemed that to account for the case of dialect levelling in the East End of Glasgow, it was necessary to enter into an account of the main economic and technological advances of the twentieth century, together with their social and cultural impact. This is indeed the territory sketched out by Hertzler. Nevertheless, it is important to set the individual case against the larger picture. The consequence of not doing so is that the explanations offered for specific cases of language shift may be hopelessly incommensurate with the scale of the forces at work. The idea of sociolinguistic prestige, for instance, offers us social ambition and snobbery as the explanation of change towards Standard English. This hardly does justice to the complexity of human feelings, even if there were no more than feelings involved. But there are also fundamental material bases for language shift. Many of these are universal in modern societies, since they derive from technological innovations and forms of industrial organisation - forms of transport, mass communications, production and consumption - that in themselves largely consitute modernisation.

The findings of this study suggest that, in effect, those forms persist that are non-standard without at the same time expressing a distinctive conceptual order. This unevenness in linguistic change is what we would expect of the spontaneous convergence of one language variety on another. Vocabulary is inherently more open than the systems of syntax, morphology and phonology. Thus its flexibility in encoding ideas allows it to adapt readily to cultural change. Mutual intelligibiity is increased and differences in codability between vernacular and standard levelled, in the most direct and economical way.[9] The picture of social immobility combined with cultural erosion that emerges calls to mind very strongly the view of the British working-class presented by Hoggart in The Uses of Literacy (1957). He deplores the tawdriness and cynical materialism of the popular culture that was already in the 1950s beginning to seduce working-class people away from a traditional way of life and set of values that was 'good and comely' (1957: 37). In the 1980s it is even more heartbreaking to see how thoroughly modern communications have unified the world, and how little of any practical or moral value is actually exchanged thereby. In this context, lip-service to working-class culture and language would be rather belated.

FOOTNOTES

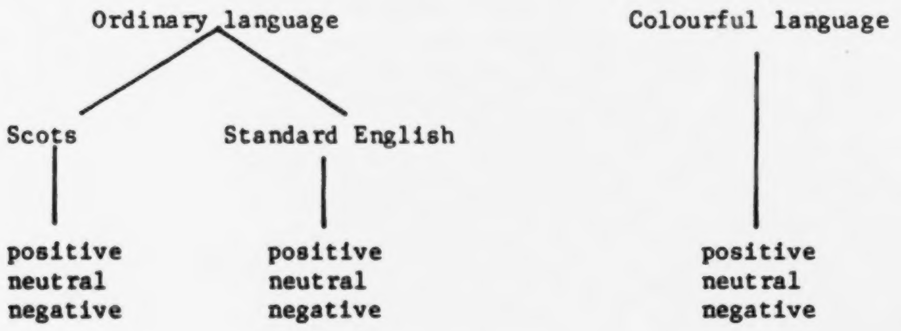
1. I can give only the briefest summary here. The findings are reported in detail in 'Some Studies in the Glasgow Vernacular' (University of Glasgow PhD, 1988). An outline can be found in Macafee (1987).

2. The only work known to me that gives a coherent version of the working-class point of view on language is Barltrop and Wolveridge, The Muvver Tongue (1980), an account of Cockney language from within. There are also some useful pointers in Roberts (1971), and Tom Leonard's poems in Glasgow dialect (see e.g. Intimate Voices, 1984) express, in their pungent way, many of the same feelings that emerged in my research, as well as others beyond its scope.

3. It is important to treat informants' views as a source of insight and interpretation, rather than as interesting 'behaviour' to be explained away.

4. Such words will not necessarily die out completely. A large proportion of the Scots vocabulary is passively known from songs, literature and historical contexts (including family lore).

5. The actual terminology was quite varied. Figures 2-4 are abstractions based on an analysis of terms used in spontaneous comments. These were sorted within eight cells (four age groups and the two sexes) according to the following scheme:



A different conceptual framework for the under-25s is suggested mainly by the absence of specific terms for Scots. This is an incidental finding, which requires to be investigated further.

6. Whereas Mead would see the opening up of the generation gap as the most significant discontinuity in modern history, Laslett takes the view that all subsequent social changes since industrialisation are eclipsed by that process, which he describes as not so much an experience but 'a perpetual tendency towards continual change' (1983: 251).

7. There were 21 groups of words and morphemes, including, -in(g), -nae (the enclitic negative particle), past tense and past participles of strong verbs, and sets of words differing from Standard English in lexical incidence, such as the sets represented by hoose = house, drap = drop, watter = water, fit = foot, yaise = use, merr = mair = more. Less frequent words were gathered into miscellaneous variables, more frequent ones were considered individually.
   Impressionistically, there are, of course, age-related differences - these appear in the different slang favoured by different ages, in the occasional use of obsolescent vocabulary by the over-70s, and in different fashions in discourse particles, exclamations and so on. Macaulay (1977) has already demonstrated quantitative differences in phonological variables in a Glasgow sample. I have emphasised dialect (including lexical incidence, which is visible in dialect writing), rather than accent, since I am interested in the continuity of a cultural tradition.

8. Interviews differed in how relaxed the atmosphere was, single sex interviews (i.e. with women) often being much more successful in terms of recording broad speech. This swamped any correlations that might have emerged with social stratification (within the working-class) or sex. Children were particularly broad, but so were many of the older women, while older men and teenage girls tended to be shy.

9. If standardisation is simply following the linguistic line of least resistance, one is left wondering about the role of education and the mass media. I would suggest that these agencies simply facilitate, and prepare people to accept and adjust to, changes that are already taking place in their economic and social environment.

## REFERENCES

Aitken,A J (1972) 'Gaelic, Scots and Gullane' *Scottish Literary News* 2: 45-6.

Aitken,A J (1982) 'Bad Scots: Some superstitions about Scots speech' *Scottish Language* 1: 30-44.

Barltrop,R and J Wolveridge (1980) *The Muvver Tongue* London The Journeyman Press.

Cameron,D (1985) *Feminism and Linguistic Theory* London Macmillan.

Cornwell,J (1985) *Hard-earned Lives* London Tavistock.

Hertzler,J (1966) 'Social uniformation and language' in S. Lieberson, ed., *Explorations in Sociolinguistics* Bloomington Indiana University Press, 170-84.

Hoggart,R (1957) *The Uses of Literacy. Aspects of Working-class Life, with Special Reference to Publications and Entertainments* London Chatto and Windus.

Labov,W (1972, 1978) *Sociolinguistic Patterns* Oxford Blackwell.

Laslett,P (1983) *The World we have Lost - Further Explored* 2nd edn. London Methuen.

Leonard,T (1984) *Intimate Voices. Selected Work, 1965-1983* Newcastle Galloping Dog Press.

Macafee,C (1987) 'Language and modern life: notes from Glasgow' in C. Macafee and I. Macleod eds. *The Nuttis Schell. Essays on the Scots Language Presented to A. J. Aitken* Aberdeen AUP, 182-94.

Macaulay,R K S (1977) *Language, Social Class, and Education. A Glasgow Study* Edinburgh EUP.

Mead,M (1970, revised 1978) *Culture and Commitment: A Study of the Generation Gap* New York Doubleday.

Murison,D (1977) *The Guid Scots Tongue* Edinburgh Blackwood.

Reah,K (1982) 'The Labovian interview', *Lore and Language* 3(7): 1-13.

Roberts,R (1971, 1983) *The Classic Slum. Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century* Harmondsworth Penguin.

Spender,D (1980) *Man Made Language* London RKP.

Thelander,M (1980) 'De-dialectalisation in Sweden' Avdelningen för Forskning och Utbildning i Modern Svenska, University of Uppsala, Rapport 86.

Trudgill,P (1972) 'Sex, covert prestige and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich' *Language in Society* 1: 179-95.

Upton,C *et al*. (1987) *Word Maps. A Dialect Atlas of England* London Croom Helm.

Walker,R (1985) 'An introduction to applied qualitative research' in Walker ed., 3-36.

Walker,R ed. (1985) *Applied Qualitative Research* Aldershot Gower.

# UNFILTERED TALK - A CHALLENGE TO CATEGORIES

Kay Mc Cormick
(English Department, University of Cape Town)

For the phrase 'unfiltered talk' I am indebted to a member of the speech community in which my research is based[1]: speaking with approbation of a progressive lawyer who had been helping working-class tenants to deal with slum landlords, she said: 'Hy het nie filter gepraat nie - hy het mooi plain gepraat dat 'n mens kan verstaan.' [He didn't talk filter(ed) - he talked nice and plain so that one could understand.]

Filters in cigarettes and speech are meant to keep impurities to a minimum; their unfiltered counterparts would seem to permit free access to whatever goes into making a strong cigarette or statement. Filtered speech allows only Afrikaans words with Afrikaans grammar, English words with English grammar. Plain or unfiltered speech allows a wide variety of mixing and combination of the two languages. When I tried to work out what the grammatical constraints on mixing and switching were, I found that my data forced me to ask other, prior questions - practical difficulties led to a series of theoretical and metatheoretical questions. How did this happen? What was it about the data that didn't seem to fit the categories and procedures productively used by so many researchers elsewhere?

The short answer is: convergence. Convergence at the phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic levels often make it difficult to identify a) whether words that fall at switch points should be regarded as English or Afrikaans or both; and b) whether certain syntactic structures should be regarded as ungrammatical, borrowed from the other language, or non-standard but not borrowed. Without clear identification of the boundaries of the lexicons of each code and of the range of morpho-syntactic structures that could be said to be integral to it (as either obligatory or optional elements) it is not possible, in a significant number of cases, to make a precise identification of the switch point. If it is not possible to do that, then one can proceed no further in categorising switches as inter- or intra-sentential, inter- or intra-clausal, between or within clause constituents. Nor is it possible to embark on an analysis of the grammaticality of those code-switched utterances.

First indications of the problems were rather unobtrusive. In the early part of the research project which draws on interviews to show speakers' linguistic preferences, it was my practice to italicise and translate those sections of quotations which were in Afrikaans. This procedure has respectable precedents and seemed sensible and unproblematic. But it was not. Consider my original transcription of these sentences (upper-case replaces italics):

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 203-214
© the author

1 DAN SE HY 'N certain word VERKEERD [then he says a certain word wrongly]

2 DIT GEE HULLE a sense of solidarity [it gives them]

My supervisor, Roger Lass, challenged my classification by spelling and typography of the indefinite articles. In South African English the indefinite article 'a' sounds the same as its Afrikaans counterpart 'N: both are pronounced as a schwa. A note to the effect that these two words were phonologically indistinguishable would adequately cover that problem, I thought. Then I encountered a problem with the copula: the invariant present tense of the verb 'to be' in Afrikaans, and the third person singular of that verb in English are very similar if not indistinguishable, in some phonological environments e.g. 3 below. This was also drawn to my attention as was the dual status of the assent word JA, an Afrikaans word now an integral part of South African English. Again I thought notes describing the nature of the indeterminacy of these items would suffice. Later when I started to examine utterances for form rather than content I realised that the difficulty was not trivial. Firstly, the indefinite article and the shared form of the verb 'to be' frequently occurred at junctures where an English string ended and an Afrikaans one started or vice versa. Moreover, JA was just one of many words that could be said to enjoy dual status not necessarily in South Africa as a whole, but certainly in District Six. Scores of English nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and even some conjunctions are incoroporated into vernacular Afrikaans constructions, and, of course on many occasions they are part of a string which includes the indefinite article and/or they are followed by the verb 'to be', third person singular, present tense. An example was Ms L's rapidly uttered:

3 DAAI old lady HET NEERGESIT EN DIE nurse is missing [that old lady sat down and the nurse is missing]

As she pronounced it, the consonant in the penultimate word was not voiced and the vowel was a barely present schwa. One might think that in this sentence is would obviously be English, because the subject and the rest of the VP are English. But in this speech community the Afrikaans word for nurse VERPLEEGSTER is never used. Nurse is always used and it always takes an Afrikaans plural marker. (There is a choice of two in fact: word- final stressed e, or word-final te as in NURSTE.) Nor can one argue that it must be English because the other element of the verb phrase is English: that is not an inviolable rule in my data.

I began to see the implications of lexical indeterminacy for my identification of switch points. At the same time theoretical reading alerted me to the possibility of structural indeterminacy. Weinreich (1968) and Bynon (1977) argue that prolonged intensive contact between two languages can lead to structural changes in one or both. When I looked for them I found examples of English words strung together by the rules that would have governed that structure in Afrikaans, but not in standard English, e.g.

4 we going now home

Are they evidence of structural borrowing? Is such an explanation plausible? Is there an alternative analysis?

At this point let me present in schematic form the chain of questions my data has driven me to ask. Answering them all is quite beyond the scope of this paper but a tantalizing challenge for future work.

Practical questions:
a. Where does the switch start? Is the pivotal word English, Afrikaans or both?
b. Is the syntactic structure of the intra-clausally code-switched utterance English, Afrikaans, both, neither?

Theoretical questions:
c. What constitutes a borrowing, lexical or structural?
d. When does an item stop being a borrowing and become an integral part of the recipient language?
e. Can a code characterised by a high number of lexical items and/or structures whose sources are from two languages be called a dialect of either language? If so, which: the one supplying most of the syntax or the one supplying most of the lexicon?

Metatheoretical questions:
f. On what grounds and from whose perspective is it appropriate to decide on issues such as c,d, and e?
g. Is it wise to consider such questions from only one perspective?
h. Are these the most appropriate and productive questions to ask in response to my data and other data that is similar?

In sum, the problems arise because the local dialects of English and Afrikaans now share some linguistic features which, in other parts of South Africa, are peculiar to either one language or the other. Phonology, lexis, morphology and syntax all show traces of convergence. Particular temporal and social circumstances are required for such a range of contact phenomena to occur. Were those of District Six conducive to such contact? Historical evidence is patchy. It records the impressions, experiences and aspirations of some groups and is silent on those of others. But even on this limited evidence it seems that the necessary conditions for such fruitful language contact did exist[2].

Cape Dutch (later Afrikaans) and English have been in contact for about 180 years in Cape Town. They were the languages of the dominant groups, but it would be a mistake to think of them as being the languages of the dominant classes only. In the 17th and 18th centuries Dutch was a lingua franca between slaves and their owners, and also among slaves who came from Ceylon, the East Indies, Madagascar and various parts of East and West Africa. Cape Dutch came to differ quite extensively from dialects of Dutch spoken in Europe and it had relatively low prestige. The 19th century brought British colonial rule and slave emancipation. Freed slaves and their descendants were among those who settled in District Six during the 19th century. Other settlers in the area were English speakers from various parts of the U.K. and Ireland, and in the last three decades of the century they were joined by Mozambicans, Swazis, Zulus, and a very large contingent of Yiddish speakers from Eastern Europe. English was used as a lingua franca among the neighbourhood's residents.

The contact between Cape Dutch - later Afrikaans - and English was intensive, many faceted, and of long duration. It was made through ethnically heterogeneous people who had no emotional investment in keeping either language 'pure' as their identities were not tied up with them in the way that, say, the identity of white Afrikaners has been with standard Afrikaans. An effect of apartheid policies was the alienation of Afrikaans speakers classified as 'Coloured' from those classified as 'White' and from their dialect of Afrikaans, if not from the language as a whole. In District Six the most striking feature of vernacular Afrikaans is prolific lexical borrowing from English, a practice which was anathema to 'white' Afrikaans nationalists at whose hands residents suffered erosions of civil rights including their right to live in District Six. In the remnant of that area where my field-work was done the local dialect of Afrikaans, called kombuistaal [kitchen language], is valued as a marker of neighbourhood solidarity and people seldom speak the standard dialect even where schooling has given them competence in it.

Kombuistaal should, I think, be regarded as a mixed code in itself - mixing is not just a speaker strategy. English loanwords form a high proportion of its speakers' vocabulary and there seems to be English influence in verb-placement rules. It has been used for a long time and so, while the gates of its lexicon are open, its grammatical structure is fairly stable. The case of local English is almost the reverse: as the higher prestige language its lexicon has absorbed little from Afrikaans, but because it is in the process of becoming a first language, its grammatical structure is not as stable. It is being introduced to children by adults whose first language is vernacular Afrikaans. Because of the nature of that dialect, speakers have quite a big English vocabulary but because they have seldom had sufficient formal education to have acquired a mastery of standard English syntax and idiomatic usage, they use a large number of calques in talking English to their children. The distinctive features of this L2 variety of English are not being entrenched because the neighbourhood's children have far more formal education than their parents did and therefore have more exposure to and drill in standard English syntax. They also have the motivation to learn to speak and write standard English. Non-standard English doesn't seem to have any particular social value and thus there is no apparent reason for its speakers to wish to preserve it. This is not true of non-standard Afrikaans.

At this point let me give a diagrammatic representation of the community's linguistic repertoire. (Of course not everyone has equal command of all of its codes.)

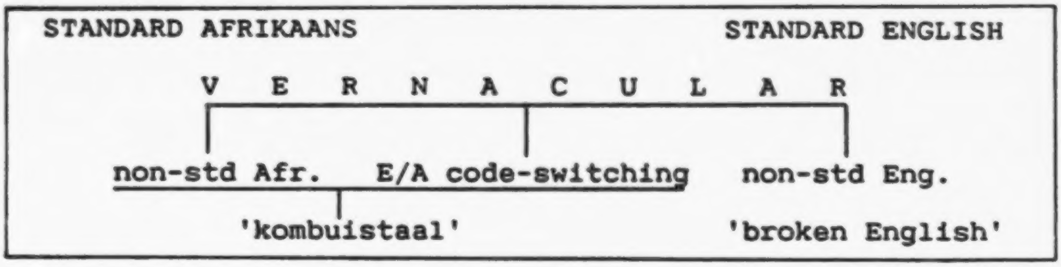


Fig. 1

The terms in inverted commas are those most commonly used by members of the speech community. Contrasting modes of referring to local English and Afrikaans indicate that the English is not seen as a dialect but as imperfectly learned English, whereas speakers are quite clear that their Afrikaans is a dialect in its own right, albeit one with low prestige.

The term kombuistaal, as members of the speech community use it, covers both the mixed code, non-standard Afrikaans, and switching between English and Afrikaans strings. They do not distinguish between mixing and switching, whereas I have found it necessary to do so. I shall indicate briefly what I mean by these terms because they are used differently by different researchers (see Schatz 1988 for an overview of the range of current meanings of these terms).

'Code-mixing' refers to cases of insertion of elements of one code into another code. Lexical items from one language may be incorporated into utterances constructed by the rules of the other language as in:

5 but TOE RAAK DIE Marion boring EK IS NIE 'N/a member VAN DIE C.A.P. NIE but EK attend HULLE functions [but then the Marion (Institute) became boring I am not a member of C.A.P. (Community Arts Project) but I attend their functions]

Or syntactic rules from both languages may be used in utterances where the vocabulary is all from one language, as in:

6 are you going tomorrow home

'Code-switching' on the other hand refers to utterances in which there is an alternation of English words strung together by English syntactic rules, and Afrikaans words strung together by the rules of Afrikaans syntax:

7 dis op Waalstraat you know Wale Street oor Buitengrachtstraat [it's on Wale Street ... across / above Buitengracht Street]

Those definitions cover the clear cases of mixing and switching, but what makes the District Six data so interesting and challenging to work with is that a significant proportion of cases are not clear. This is because, switching aside, each code shows traces of the other. Non-standard Afrikaans seems to me to be a mixed code. Until we know whether the structures in non-standard English which parallel those of Afrikaans were also features of the dialects of English spoken by early settlers in the area, we cannot know how strong the case is for saying that local non-standard English is a mixed code. Whether it is or not, it is not stable. Switching between codes like these does not lend itself to the kind of analysis that is premised upon the assumption that the contributing codes are standard and stable, an assumption that underlies much of the work done so far on grammatical constraints on code-switching, as Clyne points out (1987: 743-744).

## Linguistic features of non-standard dialects in District Six

As preparation for discussion of the kind of code-mixing and code-switching that occurs in my data I shall give a very brief description of the non-standard features of the two dialects which are either directly traceable to the other language or are parallel to equivalent structures in the other language. I shall deal with the lexicons first and then with morpho-syntactic structures.

The movement of loan-words between the two languages is not equal in both directions, either in type or in quantity: there are far more words of English origin used in sentences with Afrikaans syntax than vice versa.

The Afrikaans loan-words found in non-standard English are of a different sort from English loan-words in Afrikaans. They are mostly fillers with no obvious, easily translatable English equivalent:

8 you know my other friend NE her name is Wendy NE

or they are part of current slang as in the first emphasized word of 9. (The second is another filler meaning something like 'just'.)

9 but sometimes when I get the MOER in I SOMMER hit from A to Z [To 'get the MOER in' is to 'become angry or fed-up'.]

Sometimes Afrikaans nouns, verbs and adjectives are used because of their particular emotional colouring.

The lexicon of non-standard Afrikaans draws heavily on English, so heavily that Ms A, a typical member of the speech community could say aptly, 'When I speak Afrikaans I use English words most of the time.' The status that these English loan-words have in the eyes of the speech community and should have in the eyes of linguists is not easy to determine. They usually appear in one of the five sets of circumstances described below.

a) Speakers know both the English and the Afrikaans words for something. They use both freely, in single language and in mixed utterances, their choice on particular occasions being determined

by felt stylistic need or perceived emotional tone or social connotation. Here both they and the linguist would be fairly clear about the status of the English words in Afrikaans syntax - they would be regarded as loan-words.
b) Speakers use an English word in an Afrikaans sentence. They know it is English. They know what the Afrikaans equivalent is but neither they nor anyone else in the speech community would ever use it among themselves. Talking of cottonwool, one speaker said, 'You know I mean "watte" is the right word but we never use it.'
c) Speakers use an English word in an Afrikaans construction. They know it is English but they do not know what the Afrikaans counterpart is. Names of car parts were given as examples of this phenomenon.
d) Speakers use an English word in an Afrikaans utterance and do not know that it is English, nor do they know of an Afrikaans equivalent. (I have had to punctuate the next example as it contains dialogue within dialogue and would be difficult to follow otherwise.)

> HIER KOM HAAR MA SE 'NETTIE, WAT HET HULLE NOU GEPRAAT VAN "TOEBROODJIES"?' TOE SE EK ' 'What do you mean?' 'They say you going to make us uh TOEBROODJIES.' TOE SE EK 'That's sandwiches.' TOE SE SY 'Well, to hell! I didn't know. The first time in my life I heard it.' [Here comes her mother and says 'What were they saying about "sandwiches"?' Then I say ... Then she says ...]

e) Speakers use an English word in an Afrikaans utterance because there isn't an Afrikaans equivalent. For example the ideological colouring received from the contexts in which the dictionary equivalents 'the struggle' and DIE STRYD are usually used in contemporary South Africa make them unusable as translations of each other.

According to Bynon (1977:27) loan-words can either retain their original morphology for tense, person, plurality etc. or they can adopt those of the receiving language. On the whole in vernacular Afrikaans, verbs adopt Afrikaans morphology and nouns retain English morphological markers. Nouns constitute the largest class of loan-words, followed in this order by adjectives, verbs, adverbs and conjunctions. The only Afrikaans classes that appear to have remained entirely intact and uneroded by English are the prepositions and the personal pronoun system. As is common in so many other language contact situations it is mainly open class words that are borrowed, but there are instances of loan-words from a closed class as well. Bynon (1977:231) interprets such prolific borrowing as indicative of language contact of a particular kind, (a kind found in District Six):

> It would at any rate seem likely that borrowing from closed classes will only be possible in situations of intense linguistic exchange since it presupposes the cross-linguistic equation of syntactic patterns, whereas mere lexical borrowing from open classes would require only a minimum of bilingual speakers in the transmission process.

In the discussion below of morpho-syntactic features I give evidence of some 'cross-linguistic equation of syntactic patterns'. Whatever its origin might be, equation or convergence is evident. I deal first with two features of non-standard Afrikaans (nsA) that may have arisen as a result of contact with English, and then go on to look at a set of features of non-standard English (nsE) which differ from those of standard English, are similar to those for the equivalent structures in Afrikaans, but in most cases are also found in other dialects of English.

### Violations of rules governing verb-placement

The most striking syntactic feature of nsA distinguishing it from standard Afrikaans (sA) is the violation of Verb-second and related rules. The V2 rule applies in main clauses. In sA the tense marked part of the V has to come second and where this is an auxiliary, the MV goes to clause-final position and all other material goes between the verb elements, e.g. SY WIL MY GRAAG HELP [she wants to / is willing to help me]. (An exception to this is found in the case of an adverbial consisting of more than four words - such an adverbial may be extraposed.) In subordinate clauses the word order depends on the class of conjunction that introduces it. One class requires the word order of main clauses, e.g. SY SAL WAG WANT SY WIL MY GRAAG HELP [she will wait because she wants to help me]. The other requires that all of the verb material goes to the end of the clause in this order: modal aux, MV, tense/aspectual aux., e.g. EK WAS JAMMER OMDAT EK HAAR GRAAG SOU GEHELP HET [I was sorry because I would willingly have helped her].

What happens in nsA is that there is 'unlicenced' rightward movement of material that in sA would come within the aux. - MV sentence brace, putting that material (instead of MV or aux.) in clause-final position. The result in many cases is word order which is identical to that of English. In the examples that follow, the nsA version is given first, and the sA equivalent is given in 'b'.

10 ONS MOET study ALTWEE [we must study both]
10b ONS MOET ALTWEE STUDIE
11 EK SAL NOGAL choose ENGELS [I would still choose English]
11b EK SAL / SOU NOGAL ENGELS KIES
12 SOMS DINK DIS stupid OM TE mix DIE TWEE TALE [some (people) think it's stupid to mix the two languages]
12b SOMMIGE MENSE DINK DIS DOM OM DIE TWEE TALE TE MENG

### Change of word function

The contracted form DAAI of demonstrative adjective DAARDIE [that] is frequently used as a pronoun and can be used as subject or object as just as 'that' can used be in English, whereas sA would require a noun after DAAI.

13 EK second DAAI [I second that]
14 DAAI affect NIE VIR ONS NIE [that doesn't affect us]

The pronoun almal ['everyone', often used in nsA to mean 'everything'] can be used as a demonstrative adjective:

15 EN NOU WAT VAN please and thank you EN **ALMAL** DAAI [and now what about please and thank you and all that]

It seems that the change of function of ALMAL and DAAI could be ascribed to the influence of English, imitating its economy of form: one word for 'that' in both functions (demonstrative adjective and pronoun) and one word for 'all' in both functions (though 'all' is not always interchangeable with 'everybody').

In the following list of distinctively non-standard morpho-syntactic features of English those constructions that occur in standard Afrikaans are marked with +A and those that occur in other dialects of English are marked with +OE.

**Verb-related features**

(a) Person-marking

(i) The verb 'to be' as both auxiliary and main verb usually has the same form for third person singular and plural. It is the sE third person singular form. This is more predictable where the subject is not a pronoun. (+A +OE)

16 is the tickets available

17 the minutes was proposed

Other verbs tend to have word-final s omitted in the present tense from the third person singular, present tense, but added to the third person plural. (+OE). As Afrikaans verbs are not marked for person, attention is drawn to person-marking in English when Afrikaans speakers are taught English. I think it likely that they over-generalize the plural marking rule for nouns and put the word-final s on to verbs with plural subjects. My hypothesis was confirmed by local university students' answers to an examination question concerning the rules governing young nsE speakers' use of verbs in dialogue which contained examples of the use of word-final s described above. The most common explanation given was that 'the children have not yet learned that a third person singular subject takes a plural verb': clearly, word-final s on any word is regarded as an indication of their plurality.

(b) Tense, aspect and modal marking

(i) Past tense is frequently indicated by using the unemphatic dummy verb 'did'. (OE) This is particularly common among children.

18 he did eat his food

It is possible that this is done by analogy with Afrikaans which does not use a dummy verb in the past tense but which almost always has two words to mark the past tense: the participle HET and the MV prefixed by GE-.

**Other deletions**

(a) Serial markers 'and' and 'to' may be deleted, creating serial verb constructions that are not common in standard South African English. (+A +OE)

19 we did go sleep there

Most of the examples I have have 'go' as part of the serial. The

Afrikaans equivalent GAAN is used in the same way, so this could be a case of Afrikaans influence.
(b) The suffix '-ly' may be deleted from adverbs giving them the same form as the related adjectives (+OE +A), but as 21 indicates, this is optional:

20 it's very tight fastened
21 she can write properly but I can't write nice

**Placing of adverbials**
(a) The adverbial may immediately precede the object, which is not possible in sE. (+A)

22 I'm going to make **now** a snake

(b) Adverbs of time precede those of place instead of the reverse, which is the sE order. (+A)

23 she's going now home

The placing of adverbials has, as far as I know, no equivalent in other dialects of English so it probably comes from Afrikaans.

**Double negation (+A +OE)**
This is particularly likely to occur when the sentence has a slot for 'any', 'anything', 'anyone':

24 he haven't got no hair
25 don't bring nothing to eat

The word order is not the same as that for Afrikaans double negatives, but perhaps the principle of double negative marking in Afrikaans influenced the retention of this feature from other non-standard English dialects spoken in District Six.

**Pronoun and demonstrative adjective concord**
One form, 'that', tends to be favoured for use in both singular and plural constructions, where sE would use 'that' for the singular only and 'those' for the plural. This applies to the use of the word in both the pronoun and demonstrative adjective functions (+A):

26 that is other people's constitutions
27 he must take from that reserves

This economy of form is similar to that of sA in that sA doen't have singular and plural forms for non-personal pronouns. Again, as far as I know, this feature is not found in other dialects of English and thus probably comes from Afrikaans.

**Code-switching**

In the speech community the use of the mixed code, non-standard Afrikaans, is far more common than code-switching. In the taped discourse of 60 adults there were only 24 who switched, and they produced a total of no more than 324 switches within a conversational turn. All such instances were analysed and grouped into inter-sentential, inter-clausal and intra-clausal switches. The distinction between the first two categories is that the units that I am calling 'sentences' are not linked by conjunctions whereas those that I refer to as 'clauses' are. The last category 'fuzzy cases' is the most interesting, the one that raises the problems which led to the series of practical, theoretical and metatheoretical questions listed earlier and it is on this category that I shall concentrate after giving a summary of the distribution of types of code-switching that occur in the speech of 24 adults in interviews and meetings.

| TYPE | NUMBER | | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| INTER-SENTENTIAL SWITCHES | 90 | | 27,6 | |
| INTER-CLAUSAL SWITCHES | 84 | | 25,8 | |
| between co-ordinate clauses | | 23 | | 7,1 |
| around parenthetical clauses | | 30 | | 9,2 |
| between clauses in dependent rel. | | 31 | | 9,5 |
| INTRA-CLAUSAL SWITCHES | 97 | | 29,8 | |
| OTHER | 33 | | 10,7 | |
| incomplete clause + restart | | 26 | | 7,9 |
| after voiced hesitation | | 9 | | 2,8 |
| FUZZY CASES | 20 | | 6,1 | |

Fig.2

Let us examine four examples of 'fuzzy cases':

28 and I have to call my people to say look we are not having a dinner stall **because** EK HET VIR JULLE REGUIT GESE MY MENSE HET VIR MY GEVRA AS ONS MENSE DIE dinner stall KAN VAT **because** every year they go to the bazaar they don't get the proper food [I told you straight my people asked me if we could take the dinner stall]

The causal conjuction most commonly used in vernacular Afrikaans is 'because'. In 28 it occurs first at the end of an English clause introducing an Afrikaans one, and then at the end of a non-standard Afrikaans clause where it introduces an English one.

29 AS ONS DAAI tickets KAN VERKOOP KRY **'s all right** then we got it [if we can get those tickets sold]

The phrase in bold print is part of vernacular Afrikaans.

30 DIS WAAR WANT EK enjoy MYSELF JA EK **lyk happiness** I like to be happy [it's true because I enjoy myself yes I ]

There is a standard Afrikaans word LYK but it means 'resemble' whereas in 30 it has its non-standard Afrikaans meaning: 'like'. The standard Afrikaans word for 'happiness' is seldom if ever used in this speech community.

Taking these three examples together it could be said that words and phrases in bold print belong to both of the codes between which switching occurs. As a result the location of a switch point is problematic and so is analysis that depends upon locating it. Cases such as these pose an important challenge, in theory, to the analysis of switches between non-standard dialects that bear traces of a long history of contact. What is challenged in particular is the notion that a switch occurs between the last word of a string in language x and the first word of a string in language y. In my data it would be productive to have an additional way of locating the juncture, to use the notion of a bridge element (which could be a word or a phrase) as the location of a switch. Examples of such elements are the bold print sections of 28, 29 and 30. This idea is superficially similar to that of the 'trigger' - see for instance Clyne (1987:744-745) - but, unlike it, is more compatible with a system-oriented than a speaker-oriented approach. As I understand it, the concept of the 'trigger' word suggests something which is difficult to verify about the speaker's consciousness of the dual status of the word and about the way in which utterances are planned. The alternative that I offer doesn't exclude the possibility that a dual status word acts as a trigger for the speaker, but it does not depend on it.

The last example that I wish to consider poses a problem in the analysis of its grammaticality:

31 MAAR VAN HOOR AAN STORIES you know EN /and tv watch

The sA-sE version would be:

31b MAAR VAN STORIES LUISTER you know and watching tv

(In this environment EN and 'and' are indistinguishable in pronunciation.) In the vernacular version the Afrikaans lexical string seems to be directly modelled on its equivalent in English 'but about listening to stories', and the apparently English string is modelled on its Afrikaans equivalent en televisie kyk. There are a few other comparable examples. Are they just individual speakers' errors or eccentricites, a product of transitional instability as the speech community shifts towards English, or the early signs of the development of a common structural and lexical stock which speakers can freely 'mix and match'? I suspect that we will never know because a combination of higher literacy rates, more formal schooling and the prestige of English will intervene to halt the convergence thus eliminating the third alternative.

## Notes

*My thanks are due in the first instance to the generous cooperation of people in District Six. For support and helpful criticism throughout the project and for reading a draft of this paper I wish to express my gratitude to Roger Lass. My thanks also to other readers: Jud Cornell and Mary Bock. For financial assistance I am grateful to the University of Cape Town, and to the Human Sciences Research Council for research grants.

1 Field work was done in part of District Six, Cape Town.

2 The evidence is presented in Chapters 1 and 2 of my doctoral thesis, English and Afrikaans in District Six, which is to be submitted at the University of Cape Town later in 1988.

## References

Bynon,T (1977) Historical Linguistics Cambridge CUP

Clyne,M (1987) 'Constraints on code switching: how universal are they? Linguistics 25: 739-764

Schatz,HF (1988) 'Code-switching among Dutch immigrants in the United States' Paper given at Sociolinguistics Symposium 7 University of York

Weinreich,U (1968) Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems The Hague Mouton

# THE CONCEPT OF PRESTIGE IN SOCIOLINGUISTIC ARGUMENTATION

James Milroy
(University of Sheffield)

## Introduction: Prestige, class and the tradition

In both social and historical linguistics, the notion of prestige is very frequently appealed to as an explanation for attested linguistic change. Sometimes the term prestige is used in a well-motivated way with reference to an underlying socio-economic class (SEC) model of variation; at other times it is used routinely and apparently unreflectingly. So widespread is this tendency that it seems to be worth looking in a little detail at what is meant by the term, how it intersects and overlaps with other conceptual categories (of a social and sociolinguistic kind), and, above all, to consider whether prestige can serve as a sufficiently clear and well-defined concept to rank as the bedrock of sociolinguistic explanation - as it frequently has done. This paper is a limited attempt to examine the issues arising. We notice first something that is in my view rather important, simply because we tend quite unconsciously to be conditioned by well-established ways of thinking: this is that the appeal to prestige is not an innovation in recent sociolinguistics (Labov, 1972, 1980, etc; Trudgill, 1974, etc), but has a respectable place in the historical linguistic tradition.

Whereas present-day historical linguistics is much inclined to examine the intra-linguistic constraints on language change with relatively little appeal to social factors (Kiparsky, 1988; Lightfoot, 1988), traditional historical descriptions have made frequent appeals to social factors (involving prestige) in explaining the direction of attested changes. The notion of prestige has usually been assumed to be related to status hierarchies (often vaguely conceived as synonymous with SEC) and interpreted in that dimension; thus, it has also been assumed that the higher socio-economic groups have the highest prestige. These class-related assumptions seem to have been almost taken for granted in historical argumentation since the beginning of this century. Class-difference as explanation for change and variation is prominent in the work of E H Sturtevant (1917) in the USA and that of H C Wyld (1921, 1927) in England; after that it surfaces in A S C Ross's idea of U and non-U language (1954) and in many references to the so-called anxious Middle Classes who are forever striving to be accepted by their 'betters'. Effectively, it is part of the ideology of the first half of this century - appearing to be nothing more than common sense and therefore not open to critical examination. The elitist air of this set of assumptions is well exemplified in the following comments by E H Sturtevant (1917: 26):

> Just as fashions in dress are binding upon all members of a given class and are imitated by all who look up to that class, so fashions in language are binding upon all people of culture and are followed by other members of the community to the best of their ability.

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 215-226
© the author

Already in traditional historical linguistics, therefore, we seem to have a conceptualisation of sociolinguistic space that is unidimensional - a space in which the elite groups set the tone in language, dress and other cultural matters, and in which lower groups strive to imitate their lead. At worst, this can develop into a set of unanalysed assumptions about 'mainstream' culture, and the behaviour of groups that are somehow outside the mainstream is nevertheless interpreted in terms of mainstream stereotypes (for an eloquent attack on such assumptions in ethnographic work, see Cohen, 1982). There are, of course many other problems arising from such a conceptualisation, including the problem of how these elite fashions originate, and why - if they are elite and desirable - they are nevertheless subject to change within themselves. For linguistic change, however, the most immediate problem is that it has been widely shown (both in traditional work and in social dialectology) that linguistic changes do not necessarily, or even normally, originate in the elite variety (sometimes called the 'standard' variety), but often appear to spread into the elite variety 'from below'. As Strang (1970: 164) comments in her history of English:

> ... since the function of a prestige variety ... is to be the mark of a metropolitan elite, it may seem strange that the source of most innovations proves to be vulgar or dialectal speech.

In historical descriptions this apparent contradiction never seems to have been adequately resolved.

Despite this, the traditional emphasis on the prestige variety has been heavy, and the apparent contradiction has not prevented the historical tradition from giving an almost exclusive legitimacy to the history of 'standard' English . Thus, the recent history of English, as it appears in the handbooks, tends to become a unilinear history of the so-called prestige variety. This is plainly a major reason why the historical applications of secular social dialectology have become so important: they can help us to rewrite the history of English and other languages in a way that recognises the multidimensional nature of variation and change. In social dialectology, however, the concept of prestige is still very widely appealed to in explanation.

## Appeals to prestige in sociolinguistic explanations

Sociolinguistic research over the past few decades has established reasonably clearly that linguistic change generally originates in casual and everyday usage rather than in the more monitored and self-conscious styles (which tend to be affected by public and even literary norms). Nevertheless, sociolinguists have continued to appeal to prestige as an explanation for change. This is often a more or less routine appeal, which does not explain exactly what prestige means in any given instance, or explain why prestige norms should be accepted by speakers in some cases, but not in others. So ingrained is the habit that the appeal to prestige can even appear in work which is critical of prestige models and which attempts to replace them by other kinds of explanation. For example, at the end of a paper in which we have proposed a social network model of change, we (J & L Milroy, 1985: 381) comment:

> ... the notion of prestige does seem to be important in explaining why one particular linguistic element is a realistic candidate for innovation while others are not.

If we do not inquire further into what we mean by 'prestige', I am not sure now that this is a very meaningful statement.

It is particularly awkward that the term has been used by sociolinguistic researchers in widely differing ways, and we shall now briefly consider an example. Quite apart form the apparent contradiction involved in the idea of *covert prestige* (which attempts to explain why some changes have been observed to go against 'mainstream' norms and is a useful cover-term for the kind of argument used by historical linguists also, e.g., Strang, 1970 ), some accounts use the idea of prestige in a very different way, which appears to overlap considerably with the notion of 'careful' or 'formal' speech.

This seems to be the case in the work of Kroch & Small, who speak of 'conscious prestige norms' (1978: 45), and suggest that prestige usages will involve, for example, use of the relative pronoun in contexts where it can be omitted. One of their findings is that television talk-show presenters favour use of the relative pronoun in contexts where their guests use it less often. This appears *prima facie* to be a matter of relative carefulness in a society where there is a conscious ideology of standardised and public usage. It is much less clear that it has anything to do with prestige. Finegan & Biber (1986) are quite explicit in saying that their notion of prestige is (at least up to now) *not* involved with socio-economic status:

> In the pilot project, prestige was gauged along two dimensions, namely physical mode (i.e., approximately spoken *v* written: JM) and formality. On the basis of our investigation thus far, we are not prepared to say anything about varieties used by persons of differing socioeconomic status (1986: 396).

Their hypothesis (which resembles that of Kroch & Small) is that:

> ...more prestigious varieties of English will tend to have a higher degree of isomorphism between meaning and surface form and will be characterized by fuller (as distinct from reduced) expression (1986: 392).

It can be suggested that this is simply a mis-use of the term *prestige* (it is particularly odd that the speech/ writing difference should be viewed in prestige terms), or, alternatively, that this notion of prestige differs sharply from the traditional and sociolinguistic use of the term. Specifically, while historical and sociolinguistic use conceives of prestige as a *social* category which can be used to *explain* linguistic patterns, the above accounts are based on assumptions about the *language* system: they relate prestige to non-social hierarchies of carefulness, explicitness or formality in the forms of *language*. Furthermore, whereas traditional assumptions appeal (however vaguely) to the role of *speakers*, or groups of speakers, in society, these accounts appear to be language-based, i.e., the relation of meaning to surface form becomes crucial in a taxonomy of 'prestige' as against 'non-prestige' varieties of language (on speaker-based v system-based approaches, see further Gumperz, 1982; J & L Milroy, 1985). My main point here, however, is simply to call attention to the some of the very different ways in which the notion of prestige can be conceptualised, and hence the vague and uncertain nature of the term as it is variably used by linguists. In the next section, we shall see that Labov's account of speaker-innovation has much in common with traditional accounts and runs into some of the same conceptual difficulties.

## Prestige and linguistic innovations

As we have already noticed, the difficulty in explaining why linguistic changes do not usually move in the direction of the prestige norm (as used by elite groups) is a familiar one in the tradition. Strang (1970: 164-5) notes that if change comes about in the elite language, it can only come from 'socially inferior' varieties. She then goes on to attach the term prestige to forms current in the socially inferior varieties from which the elite variety borrows. Less 'assured' speakers of the elite variety, she suggests, may perceive 'prestige' in certain forms that are, in the broad sense, socially inferior to their own. Thus, we appear to have - both in the tradition and in present-day sociolinguistics - two different senses in which the term prestige can be used (besides the other sense reviewed above: Finegan & Biber: 1986). It may seem that these two senses are mutually contradictory - or more specifically that the second sense (approximately 'covert prestige') is proposed because linguists simply cannot get away from the idea that forms adopted by a community must in some sense carry 'prestige'. It certainly appears that to use both senses of the term in the same piece of research will not be explanatory, as the mere use of the term prestige will not in itself explain why change X moves in one direction (overt prestige) and change Y in the other. As we shall see below, other bases of interpretation can be offered, which avoid this apparent contradiction.

A similar difficulty is evident in Labov's (1980: 261) characterisation of the linguistic innovator (which relies heavily on the notion of prestige). It may be summarised thus:

> (1) Speakers who lead sound change are those with the highest status in their local communities as measured by a social class index.
> (2) Among persons of equal status 'the most advanced speakers are the persons with the largest number of local contacts within the neighborhood, yet who have at the same time the highest proportion of their acquaintances outside the neighborhood'. Labov then goes on to comment 'Thus we have a portrait of individuals with the highest local prestige who are responsive to a somewhat broader form of prestige at the next larger level of social communication'.

We have noted elsewhere that a social network model cannot easily accept this account of the idealised speaker-innovator. Here, we note merely that Labov appears to use the notion of prestige in two different ways: first he presents a superordinate locus of change, depending on the broader socio-economic class distribution in the wider community (this is surely implicit in measuring the status of the innovator by a social-class index); within this, however, he presents a more refined or micro-level locus of change within a neighbourhood group of roughly equal status. On the one hand, we have a kind of prestige that is somehow agreed on by the wider community, but on the other a micro-level kind of 'local prestige', which is presumably not the same, but which must depend on the way in which this innovator is subjectively evaluated by his peers in his local social networks. It seems appropriate to inquire into what these kinds of prestige might be, as they appear to belong to two different orders of conceptualisation.

The broader kind of prestige is predicated on the hierarchical organisation of society and derives from this, whereas local prestige would appear to depend on subjective evaluations conferred on individuals at the micro-level by members of their immediate social networks. It is of course a truism that many persons who are perceived to have high prestige at the micro-level (the leaders of street gangs, for example) may nevertheless have low prestige at the macro-level; therefore to draw a clear conceptual distinction between these two kinds of prestige seems to be essential. We may start by recalling that in historical linguistics and dialectology there are numerous cases in which patterns of diffusion cannot be explained as dependent on the first kind of prestige: prestige in the wider community.

Henning Andersen (1986), for example, points out that many changes take place which cannot be said to flow from prestige groups. He notes an example in the history of Polish, in which certain northern Polish forms (with plain labial consonants) ousted Southern Polish forms with sharped labials rather than vice versa, at a time when southern Polish speakers (around Cracow) enjoyed greater power and prestige. In his discussion, Andersen further proposes that the notion of prestige should be used with some caution and suggests that 'there is no need to postulate the strong kind of motivation (for linguistic change) implicit in the notion of prestige; it is sufficient to hypothesize a community solidarity between speakers, a bonding strong enough to find expression in the levelling of speech differences' (1986: 6). He views the notion of prestige as heavy-handed (1986: 51) and finds it more useful to think in terms of 'asymmetry of bonding, and to characterise the the attitude of the innovating community as exocentric, and that of their models as endocentric (my emphasis).' Thus, the southern Polish community, although carrying prestige (in the wide sense that we have been distinguishing) was exocentric and therefore open to outside influences.

In English historical linguistics, the history of London English is a clear case of long-term exocentrism, despite the fact that the language of the capital must have been thought to carry prestige - in some sense. Early post-Conquest London English seems to have been Southern/ South-eastern in type, but during the Middle English period it gave way to influences from the East Midlands - to such an extent that it became an East Midland dialect. By the sixteenth century certain very salient forms of Northern and East Midland origin had become firmly established - for example, the 3rd sing -s inflexion and the th forms of the 3rd plur personal pronoun (they, their, them): furthermore, the morphological simplifications (leading inter alia to loss of grammatical gender) that had been accepted early in the East Midlands were also in due course accepted into London English. The history of London English appears to be a paradigmatic case of adoption without prestige (in the wide sense that we have distinguished) being involved. It does not seem to be very helpful to speculate that some other kind of prestige must have been involved, or to label the long-term changes as cases of covert prestige or change from below. It seems to be more helpful (in the case of London English) to postulate that its exocentrism depended on the number of weak ties contracted between Londoners and speakers of donor dialects (see J & L Milroy, 1985).

Remembering that changes come about as a result of speaker activity in communities, Andersen's suggestion that the motivation for change within communities arises from a desire for solidarity rather than prestige seems to be generally helpful. Adopting an innovation and resisting innovation - in different communities at different times - can thus both be seen as Acts of Identity (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985): in the one case maintaining the identity of the solidary group, in the other changing its identity or identifying with another group. In our own investigations of dialect-divergent communities in which very variable patterns of change (not necessarily conforming to the predictions of the New York model) have been discovered, we have of course found it vital to focus on the solidary function of language within groups, relating our work closely to ethnographic investigations which do not in themselves focus on language, but on other aspects of solidary behaviour (for example, the work of Bott, 1971 on social network, and more recently the papers in Cohen, 1982). Into our model of the speech community we can now incorporate the idea that language is used symbolically to mark solidarity or social distance, an idea which is familiar in the interactional sociolinguistics of Gumperz and in accounting for (for example) choice of address terms or more generally patterns of polite behaviour (Brown and Levinson, 1987). We have also been deeply influenced in interpreting variation by the perceptions of the distinguished scholar to whom this volume is dedicated, R B Le Page. In the multidimensional space of historical and social language use (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985), the key social variables that we must investigate are identity variables.

In the remainder of this paper, I should like to focus on instances in current social dialectology that are not satisfactorily accounted for by using prestige (without further elaboration), or by relying on an underlying prestige model, as explanation for change. It should be noted that while such concepts as class, status or rank may be viewed as identity variables interacting with others (such as gender and social network), they have not generally been used this way in the literature, but have served as the key 'prestige' variables in terms of which other patterns of use are interpreted. This is particularly clear in the case of sex, and I shall therefore comment on this first.

## Interpreting sex-differentiation

The primacy of the social class 'prestige' model in the interpretative process is clear in most of the work in quantitative social dialectology that has been carried out since 1966. Until recently, there have been few exceptions, apart from our own work (and see now Horvath, 1985). In general, however, patterns found in other speaker variables, such as age and sex, have often tended to be seen as secondary and interpreted in relation to social class; yet, it is not necessary to assume that social class differences are in all circumstances primary motivators of change or that it would be appropriate in all societies to make this assumption: it is quite possible that speaker variables other than social class are in some cases primary in linguistic variation and change, or that they interact with other variables in a complex way. This could be so, for example, in the case of sex- (or gender-) differentiation in speech.

As gender-differentiation, unlike social class, appears to be universal, it can of course be suggested that gender is a primary identity variable. This implies that males and females speak differently in order to emphasise their gender identity, and not necessarily, or primarily, for social prestige reasons. One of the main findings of our inner-city work in Belfast was that gender-difference, even within a one-class study, was in itself highly consistent (J & L Milroy, 1978, etc). Horvath (1985) has recently re-graphed some of Labov's New York City findings in gender terms and has shown inter alia that the pattern of Nathan B (Labov, 1972) is perfectly consistent if viewed in gender terms and only 'exceptional' if it is viewed primarily in terms of social class. For Nathan B, therefore, it seems that his identity as a male outweighs any supposed membership of some abstractly defined social class grouping. L Milroy (this volume) presents data from Newcastle upon Tyne, which suggests that as there is no overlap between male and female groups for certain variables, gender identity is again primary.

If, however, we view gender differences in terms of a primary SEC model, female norms are virtually always skewed in the same direction: females are usually found to be moving upwards on the SEC continuum. Thus, it has been widely suggested that since females usually have less freedom to be upwardly mobile than males have, they attempt to acquire status (or 'prestige') 'by proxy' through their use of language. This, however, appears to involve a contradiction, as - if it is males who actually acquire social status and prestige - it is difficult to see why male language should not be considered status-ful, and why, for example, the wives of successful men do not simply imitate the language of their husbands (L Milroy, 1987; see also the discussion by Coates, 1986). The prestige-based explanation for gender-differentiation (on which we have so commonly relied) thus seems to have some serious flaws in it.

It may be more illuminating, therefore, to interpret social differentiation (including gender differentiation) in a way that rejects the primacy of prestige in argumentation. Although I have insufficient space to develop it here, I would like to suggest an approach which relies, in the first place, not on prestige, but on observing the social functions of in-group and out-group norms and the different social functions of local and supra-local varieties. We shall bear in mind also Andersen's distinction between open and closed groups. In this kind of interpretation, we have to ask why speakers and social groups sometimes adopt new forms and sometimes do not, and it seems that a costs and benefit analysis may be more illuminating here than the simple and unanalysed notion of prestige. Although human beings are in general resistant to change, it can be suggested that new forms are adopted when the perceived benefit of adoption outweighs the perceived cost. In the remainder of this paper, I pass on to other examples in which prestige does not in itself appear to explain the phenomena: I shall first refer briefly to patterns of linguistic simplification that have been noted (summarising some points that are more fully developed in forthcoming work): finally, I shall discuss some of the findings of the Philadelphia community studies (as reported in D Sankoff, 1986) in terms of interpretations based on the factors of prestige and/ or solidarity.

## Interpreting patterns of simplification

Patterns of phonological and morphological simplification have been widely noted in the literature, and have led to influential generalisations: chiefly that of Jakobson to the effect that dialects which develop supra-local functions tend to develop simpler systems, and that of Herzog and Labov to the effect that in contact situations 'mergers expand at the expense of distinctions' (I am, of course, aware that the notion of simplification is controversial, and I use it here in two ways: a system is simpler if it is describable in terms of fewer rules and/ or if it is observed to have fewer phonemic or inflexional distinctions). One of the essential concerns of the research projects carried out in Belfast was to explore these historical simplification patterns, as it had been noticed that outer-city speech tended to be descriptively simpler than inner-city speech in two major respects. First, sets of allophonic variants, conditioned by following consonant and describable in terms of specified constraints on variation, tended to disappear in outer-city speech. This pattern is discussed by J Milroy (1982) and is set out in a simplified way in Table 1 (and note). Second, sets of lexical alternants (alternating pronunciations for particular lexical sets, as discussed in J Milroy, 1980) also tended to be markedly reduced in the outer city. Recently, taking his cue from Jakobson, Henning Andersen (1986) has also focused on simplification patterns in a wide variety of dialects and has suggested that the various patterns revealed cannot be satisfactorily accounted for in terms of prestige motivation.

TABLE 1: **Idealised representation of phonetic range of /a/ in inner-city Belfast**

| [ɛː] | [æ] | [a] | [ɑ] | [ɔː] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **bag** | **back** | **bat** | **bad** | **bad** |
| **bang** | | **snap** | **grass** | **grass** |
| | | **ant** | **hand** | **hand** |
| | | **back** | **snap** | |

**Front only:** **velar environments**

**Back only:** **fricative & voiced consonant environments (excluding velars)**

**Front ~ back:** **voiceless stop environments (excluding velars);**

Note: Outer city speakers display a gradual pattern of rule-loss, leading to convergence in some cases on low-front values for all tokens (J Milroy, 1982).

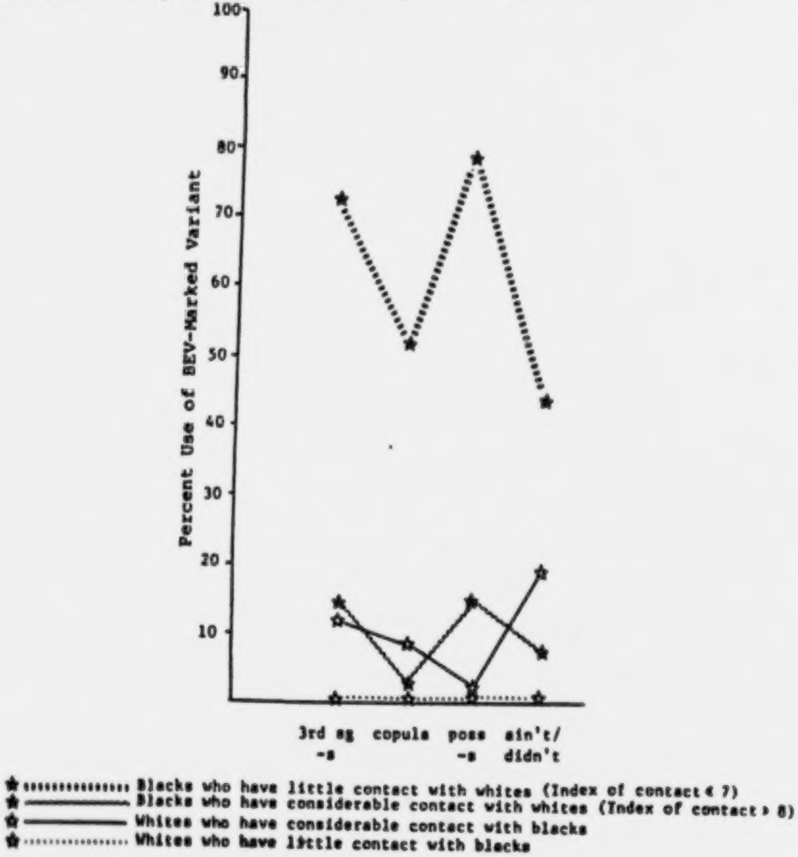
Indeed, it is perfectly obvious that a desire for prestige cannot possibly account for patterns of phonological or morphological simplification (reduction of contrasts and reduction in the number of rules) as observed in communities, as there is no reason why a 'simplified' dialect should have more or less prestige than a more complex one. Trends to simplification are historically well attested, for example, in the national standard languages of many western European nation states; yet at the same time they are also attested in varieties that are not usually accorded 'prestige' (Pidgin and Creole languages, for example). Similarly, morphological complexity can be a property of languages of both high and low 'status'.

Explanations for these phenomena appear to be more accessible if instead of appealing to prestige we adopt a network-based account, which examines carefully the situations in which groups are open to innovations as against situations where they are not. Using such an approach, we have examined cases where innovations are accepted from outside the close-tie group and have suggested that such innovations are made possible to the extent that relatively weak ties develop in populations (J & L Milroy, 1985). These weak ties are the channels through which new information flows. On the other hand, as Andersen points out, innovations may also develop in closed groups who have little or no contact with the outside world. It seems that this phenomenon can also be accommodated in an identity-based account: in adopting 'exorbitant' internal changes (Andersen, 1986), these closed groups are affirming their separate identity. What we usually call prestige (in the SEC dimension) can also be accommodated in this approach, but the motivation for adopting new forms or abandoning old ones is not the desire for social prestige but (in relatively 'open' groups) the functional need to communicate outside high density/ multiplexity clusters. In such supra-local situations, complicated distinctions that have social and symbolic in-group functions may also become redundant and subject to loss. Thus, we also have here the basis of an explanation for the development of supra-local norms and a reason for expecting simplification patterns to develop in supra-local varieties: it is easier to lose distinctions than to acquire new distinctions from outside varieties. In this perspective, the gender differences that we have discussed can be reinterpreted in terms of female preferences for supra-local rather than localised norms and explanations for this sought in the different socialising habits (or even attitudes) of males and females. Bearing in mind these general points about prestige explanations as aginst solidarity and identity-based explanations, I end this paper with some limited comments on the findings of the Philadelphia neighbourhood studies.

## Interpreting inter-ethnic patterns

Several reports on the Philadelphia studies appear in Sankoff (1986), and it is worth commenting that the idea of prestige in a SEC (and to some extent ethnic) dimension is still very influential in interpreting the variation revealed. Labov & Harris (1986: 20-21) mention the 'prestige' of the localised innovator (who is more important than the 'mainstream' norms such as radio and television); yet, at the same time they speak of the 'dominant' dialect as against the 'dominated'. This is because a group of black speakers who have considerable contact with whites converge towards white morpho-syntactic norms more markedly than a group of white speakers (who are 'closely associated with black culture') converge towards black norms. Thus, the white dialect is seen as dominant and less subject to change in a non-prestige direction. I do not think that this kind of interpretation gets round the historical contradiction mentioned earlier in this paper (i.e., that dominant dialects are often influenced 'from below'), and, despite the fact that Labov & Harris explicitly reject social network as an interpretative category, it seems to me that some of these findings are open to interpretations based on strong/ weak ties and the identity function of linguistic variation.

FIGURE 1 **Average percent use of BEV-marked morpho-syntactic variants by four groups of speakers**; adapted from Ash & Myhill (1986: 39)



What is particularly noticeable about these two groups (white-oriented blacks and black-oriented whites) is that on morphosyntactic variation their scores average about the same: on copula-deletion and ain't for didn't, the whites actually out-perform the blacks on 'black' variants. What is also noticeable from Figure 1 is that, whereas the 'core' black group uses these features quite variably (presumably also using the 'white' variants), the core white group does not use the 'black' variants at all. Thus, the core black vernacular (whether or not it is 'dominated') incorporates a resource not available to mainstream white speakers - the capacity to alternate between 'black' and 'white' morphosyntactic variants according to occasion of use. In this perspective, the convergence of white-oriented blacks towards 'white' norms is not so remarkable - as these white norms are already available to them within black vernacular variation. The reason why the white-oriented blacks use the white norms more often than other blacks seems to be accessible through a theory of 'weak ties', as it is clear from the authors' descriptions of these speakers that their contacts with whites are of a classic weak-tie type: they are con-men, hustlers and political activists. The degree to which these speakers use the white norms is increased by the range and number of situations in which they have weak-tie contacts outside their core community. Ash and Myhill (1986: 41) suggest that 'prestige' is involved in this shift towards white norms. I find it very difficult to see in what way an appeal to prestige can explain this type of phenomenon.

The convergence of black-oriented white speakers to 'black' norms is in a sense more remarkable, as the core white dialect does not possess the new variants (copula deletion etc) that they adopt (to a certain extent) in carrying out their act of identity: these outside variants have to be acquired. Although the researchers do not give precise information as to the strength of these speakers' participation in black culture, a theory of innovations (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) would predict that their ties with both communities are likely to be relatively weak: they seem to resemble the peripheral innovators characterised by Rogers & Shoemaker. To explore this point, however, we would need fuller ethnographic information. Clearly, knowing what we all know about the distribution of power in society, the innovations that these whites are introducing are not very likely to penetrate the white community generally. This does not, of course, make the behaviour of these speakers any less innovatory.

## Conclusions

I have suggested in this paper that the notion of prestige has been too readily appealed to in explanations of language variation and change, and that such appeals result in apparent contradictions and conceptual confusions. I have also (all too briefly) examined certain instances where a more satisfying explanation can be suggested. It seems that explanations based on the identity-function of language are more successful than blanket appeals to 'prestige' factors, and that notions of prestige can in fact be subsumed (and accounted for) in identity-based explanations.

## REFERENCES

Andersen, H (1986). Center and periphery: adoption, diffusion and spread. MS.
Ash, S & Myhill, J (1986) Linguistic correlates of inter-ethnic contact. In Sankoff, ed. 33-44
Brown, P & Levinson, S (1987) Politeness. Cambridge: CUP
Bott, E (1971) Family and social network, rev ed. London: Tavistock
Coates, J (1986) Women, men and language. London: Longman

Cohen, A (1982) *Belonging*. Manchester: Manchester U Press

Finegan, E & Biber, D (1986) Toward a unified model of sociolinguistic prestige. In Sankoff, ed. 391-397

Granovetter, M (1973) The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*: 1360-1380

Gumperz, J (1982) *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge: CUP

Horvath, B (1985) *Variation in Australian English*. Cambridge: CUP

Kiparsky, P (1988) Phonological change. In Newmeyer (ed): 363-415

Kroch, A & Small, C (1978) Grammatical ideology and its effect on speech. In Sankoff, D, ed. *Linguistic variation: models and methods*. New York: Academic Press. 45-55

Labov, W (1972) *Sociolinguistic patterns*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania Press

Labov, W, ed (1980) *Locating language in time and space*. New York: Academic Press

Labov, W & Harris, W (1986) *De facto segregation of black and white vernaculars*. In Sankoff, ed. 1-24

Le Page, R B & Tabouret-Keller, A (1985) *Acts of identity*. Cambridge: CUP

Lightfoot, D (1988) Syntactic change. In Newmeyer (ed): 303-323

Milroy, J (1980) Lexical alternations and the history of English. In Traugott E et al (eds) *Papers from the 4th ICHL*. Amsterdam: Benjamin

Milroy, J (1982) Probing under the tip of the iceberg; phonological 'normalization' and the shape of speech communities. In Romaine, S. *Sociolinguistic variation in speech communities*. London: Edward Arnold. 35-47

Milroy, J & L (1978) Belfast: change and variation in an urban vernacular. In Trudgill, P. *Sociolinguistic patterns in British English*. London: Edward Arnold

Milroy, J & L (1985) Linguistic change, social network and speaker innovation. *JL*: 339-384

Milroy, L (1987) *Observing and analysing natural language*. Oxford: Blackwell

Newmeyer, F, ed (1988) *Linguistics: the Cambridge survey* Vol I: CUP

Rogers, E & Shoemaker, F (1971) *Communication of innovations*, 2nd ed. New York: Free Press

Ross, A S C (1954) Linguistic class-indicators in present-day English. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*: 20-56

Sankoff, D, ed (1986) *Diversity and Diachrony*. Amsterdam: Benjamin

Strang, B (1970) *A history of English*. London: Methuen

Sturtevant, E (1917) *Linguistic change*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press

Trudgill, P (1974) *The social differentiation of English in Norwich*. Cambridge: CUP

Wyld, H C (1921) *A history of modern colloquial English*. London: Fisher Unwin

Wyld, H C (1927) *A short history of English*. London: John Murray

# GENDER AS A SPEAKER VARIABLE: THE INTERESTING CASE OF THE GLOTTALISED STOPS IN TYNESIDE

Lesley Milroy
(University of Newcastle upon Tyne)

All known societies appear to use language as one means amongst others of marking out gender differences. Although gender is generally understood to be a cultural and sex a biological category, I shall adopt here the common linguistic practice of referring to sex differences in language. This avoids potential terminological confusion between cultural and grammatical categories, both of which are referents of the term gender. The precise form taken by linguistic sex differentiation varies from community to community; for example it is likely to be manifested differently in pre- and post- industrial societies and to vary in accordance with culturally determined roles assigned by societies (see Coates 1986 for a general discussion of the issues). In bilingual communities undergoing a process of language shift, the sexes are likely to focus on the new monolingual norm at different rates (Gal 1979).

Most sociolinguistic studies in western hierarchically stratified societies have set out initially to examine the relationship between language and class, or language and ethnicity. The material on sex-marking which has appeared is therefore a by-product, the surveys not having been designed in the first place with this dimension of variation in mind. In westernised societies, the form which linguistic sex-marking has commonly been interpreted as taking is for women to approximate more closely than men of similar status to the prestige norm. But such an interpretation of the very salient sex differences which plainly do exist, and are moreover theoretically important, relies on the analyst's capacity to assign a comparable social class index score to both males and females. In fact one of the problems of a stratificational analysis is that it classifies women in a somewhat arbitrary manner, sometimes assigning to them the class of their husbands or fathers and sometimes determining their class by their own occupations. Because of this (and indeed for other reasons - see Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985 for a much broader critique) it is hard to take seriously the various interpretations of linguistic sex-marking which are based upon the notion of prestige. Perhaps the commonest explanation of the patterns which emerge from a stratificational analysis is that in the absence of opportunities to mark status by occupation, women resort to language. A number of obvious objections might be made to explanations of this kind (Cameron and Coates 1985; Coates 1986). For example, it is not clear why, if they are motivated by a desire to mark prestige, wives of men in high status occupations should not simply imitate the language of their husbands.

Once it has been acknowledged that linguistic differentiation is a particularly salient manifestation of the tendency of communities to mark out gender distinctions by a variety of means, it is difficult, given the

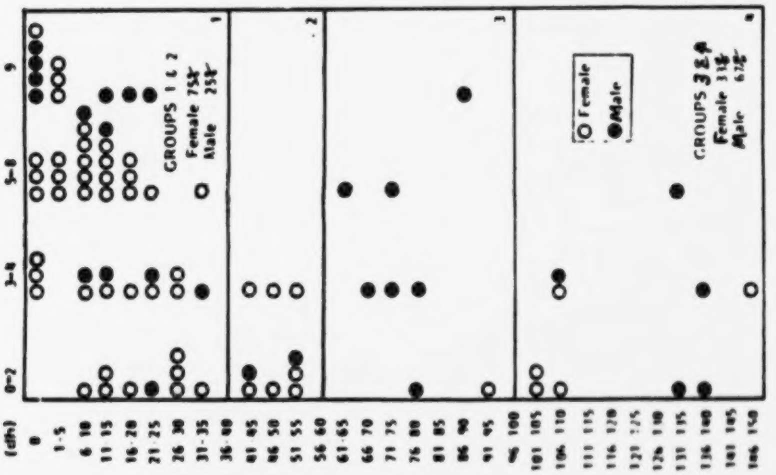
**York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 227-236**
**© the author**

general orientation of current sociolinguistics, to progress further in finding a convincing explanation of linguistic sex-marking. The most fruitful procedure, as with so many problems, might well be to try and rethink the whole issue and to seek lines of explanation other than those associated with the notion of prestige. Horvath's (1985) re-graphing of some of Labov's data in terms of 'natural' linguistic groupings rather than primarily in terms of social class even suggests that sex should take precedence over class as the major speaker variable. Criticising an initial approach to the data in terms of class (which is a problematic variable even at the sampling stage) she remarks that 'if social class is seen to take precedence, then these other social dimensions might remain hidden or only dimly perceived.' (Horvath 1985:64). One implication of these comments is that it is perhaps more reasonable (certainly just as reasonable) to explain class differences in terms of sex, as an alternative to the standard approach to the explanation of sex differences in terms of class. In fact the issue raised here is a serious one for sociolinguistic theory.

Although it is clear from Horvath's graph of Labov's (dh) data (see Figure 1) that sex of speaker accounts for the natural groupings which appear rather better than class (which nevertheless has a substantial effect) sociolinguists have for many years attempted to 'explain' sex differences in class terms. They have not usually acknowledged the theoretical assumptions underlying their line of argument - that women are for various reasons more likely to be oriented to high prestige norms than men. However, the rather unconvincing and ad hoc character of these explanations has been spelt out by, for example Coates (1986). Nor have they greatly advanced our understanding of the nature and role of sex differentiation in language, or how it interacts with social class variation. That I think is the rather depressing conclusion we are forced to draw from scrutiny of more than 20 years of work in the Labovian tradition. I think that Bob Le Page, who has for many years been in the forefront of criticisms of 'unidimensional' sociolinguistics, would share these general views, although he would probably offer a much more radical critique of the problem and a very different approach from the one which I am developing in this paper.

Figure 1.

(dh) in New York City (After Labov 1966 and Horvath 1985)



Back now to language, sex, and class. The data discussed by Horvath and presented graphically in Figure 1 cannot easily be dismissed as an isolated example. Coates has regraphed a substantial amount of data from a number of well-known sociolinguistic surveys which shows clearly that sex of speaker quite commonly accounts for patterns of variation at least as well as, and in some cases, better than, social class. In a recent study of the dialect of Amsterdam, Schatz (1986) finds sex-related differences in the distribution of variants of the (a) variable in low status speakers only, rather than the expected pattern of women approximating to the norms of a higher social group. Finding that the existing paradigm does not accommodate the Amsterdam data, she remarks 'No other sociolinguistic study has ever documented the existence of separate status-bound male and female linguistic variants....The existence of such sex-bound socially diagnostic variables definitely merits further research' (Schatz 1986:102f.). The problem faced by Schatz (and no doubt others who have uncovered but not reported such 'anomalous' data) is that current sociolinguistic thinking does not provide a framework for interpreting patterns of this kind.

Although it is possible to cite data from a number of studies in support of the argument that sex differences cannot appropriately be explained in terms of class, I shall concentrate here on one small pilot study which set out explicitly to examine the relationship between the variables of sex and class, rather than viewing the former as a by-product of the latter. An analysis carried out in Newcastle upon Tyne, by Rigg (1987) on variation between glottalised and non-glottalised variants of the fortis stops /p, t, k/ in word-medial and word-final positions shows that, as in Amsterdam, the effect of sex on a given variable can sometimes be quite dramatically greater than that of class. Sixteen speakers were studied in all, whose ages ranged from 23 to 55: four males and four females from professional families, and the same number who were unemployed or in unskilled occupations. The number of tokens for each speaker for each variable listed in Table 1 varies between 30 and 40. Average frequency of glottalised variants used in spontaneous conversations is as follows:

Table 1.

Percentage of glottalised variants of three voiceless stops in the spontaneous speech of 16 Tynesiders.

| | WORKING CLASS | | | MIDDLE CLASS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (p) | (t) | (k) | (p) | (t) | (k) |
| MALE | 99.5 | 97.0 | 94.5 | 96.5 | 91.0 | 80.5 |
| FEMALE | 60.0 | 31.0 | 28.0 | 27.0 | 32.5 | 11.0 |

Although there clearly is an effect of class here, it is dwarfed beside the effect of sex; the glottalisation which is so characteristic of

Tyneside vernacular (see Wells 1982:374) is better described as a male norm than a working class norm. Data such as these, taken in conjunction with the points raised by Horvath, Coates and Schatz, suggest that we are asking the wrong question about sex differentiation in language if we approach it in terms of social class by asking why women approximate to the norms of the class above them. As Horvath points out, such an approach leads to a rather dim perception of the character of the differentiation (one is tempted to suggest that it is a little like characterising biological differences between men and women in terms of differences in average height or weight). It also seems to have the effect of blinkering us to alternative lines of investigation.

If we look further at the distribution of these glottalised variants in the speech of the Tynesiders, the importance of disentangling the variables of class and sex point becomes even clearer. Figure 2 compares frequencies for conversational and word-list styles with respect to word-medial position where glottalisation is most likely. It is apparent that the men do not use the glottal variables to mark out stylistic distinctions, the glottalisation rule being near-categorical for males in both classes. Turning to the women, we see a spectacular difference. With the exception of SM,women in both classes completely avoid the glottalised variant in word-list style. The interesting point about SM is that she is only 23 years old, 15 years younger than any of the other women. Hence, we may suggest tentatively that the male pattern of near-categorical glottalisation is likely to spread further in the speech community; and we do have some corroboratory evidence of this from a separate study of 8 year old school-children from Benwell, a working class area of Newcastle (Cowhig 1986). This also revealed sharp patterns of sex differentiation, with the girls behaving in a similar way to SM. Incidentally, the configurations in Figure 2 also suggest that the glottalisation rule has affected /k/ later than /p/ or /t/, an issue pertaining to the progress of linguistic change. Although we shall not pursue the matter of linguistic change in detail here, we shall look shortly at differences in the patterning of variants of these phonological variables relative to each other, with attention to the speaker variable of sex.

We may conclude from Table 1 and Figure 2 that there are interesting patterns of sex differentiation in this glottal metavariable (comprising three sub-variables) which appear to be relatively independent of class. Figure 3, where the solid dots represent male speakers and the unshaded ones female speakers, reveals a further interesting difference in the way men and women characteristically use glottalised variants of the three variables. . Males generally, particularly working-class males, seem to have a strong tendency to use the glottalised variants of all three variables at similar frequency levels, while the women tend to use them at differing levels. This perhaps reflects the progress and ordering of the glottalisation rule through time and social space, which at the time of the study was near categorical for working-class men, who are followed closely by middle-class men. The rule is apparently affecting the women more gradually, one phonological variable at a time; and perhaps most interestingly of all, SM

Figure 2.

Percentage of glottalised variants of (p), (t) and (k) in word-medial position in two speech styles of 16 Tynesiders.

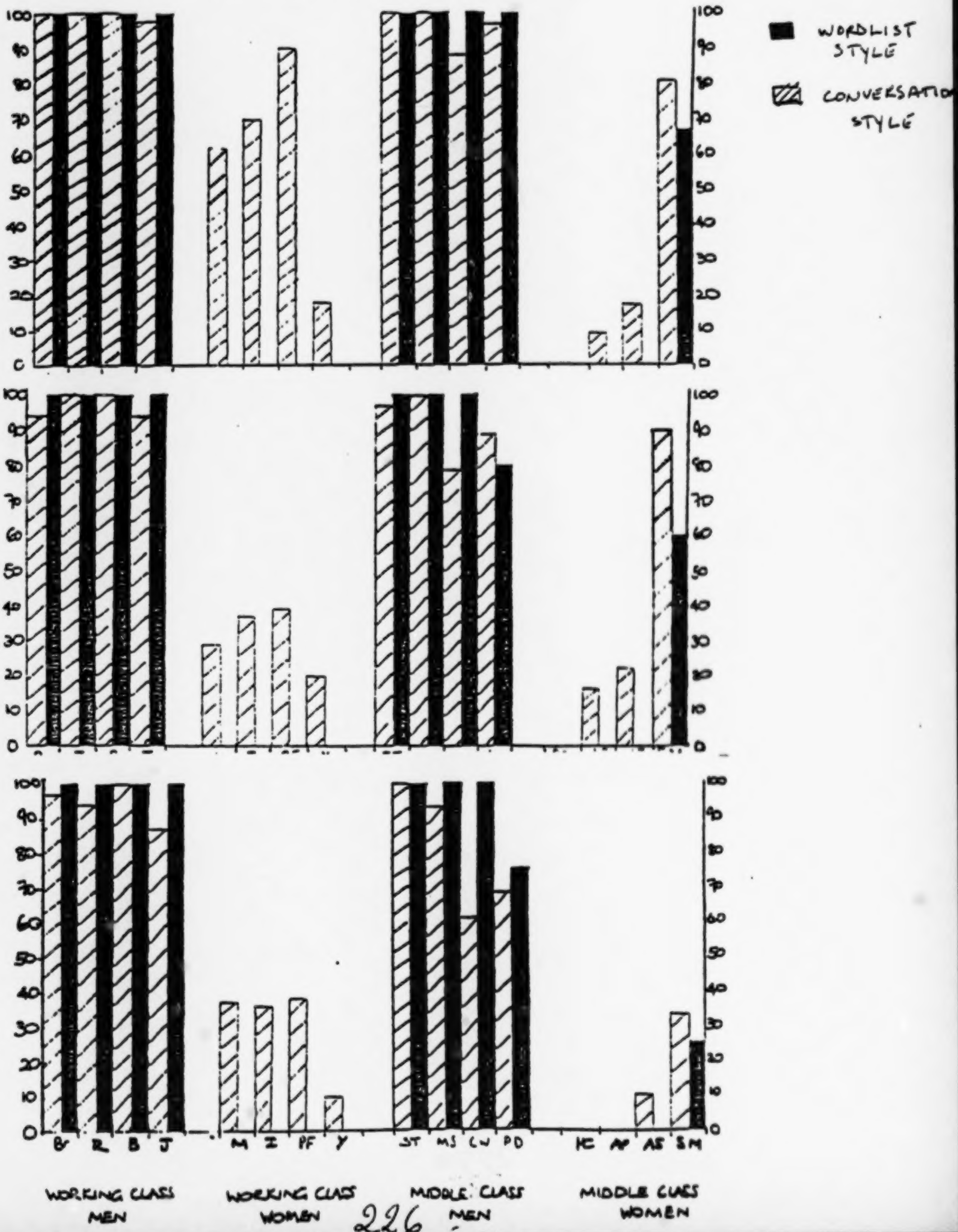
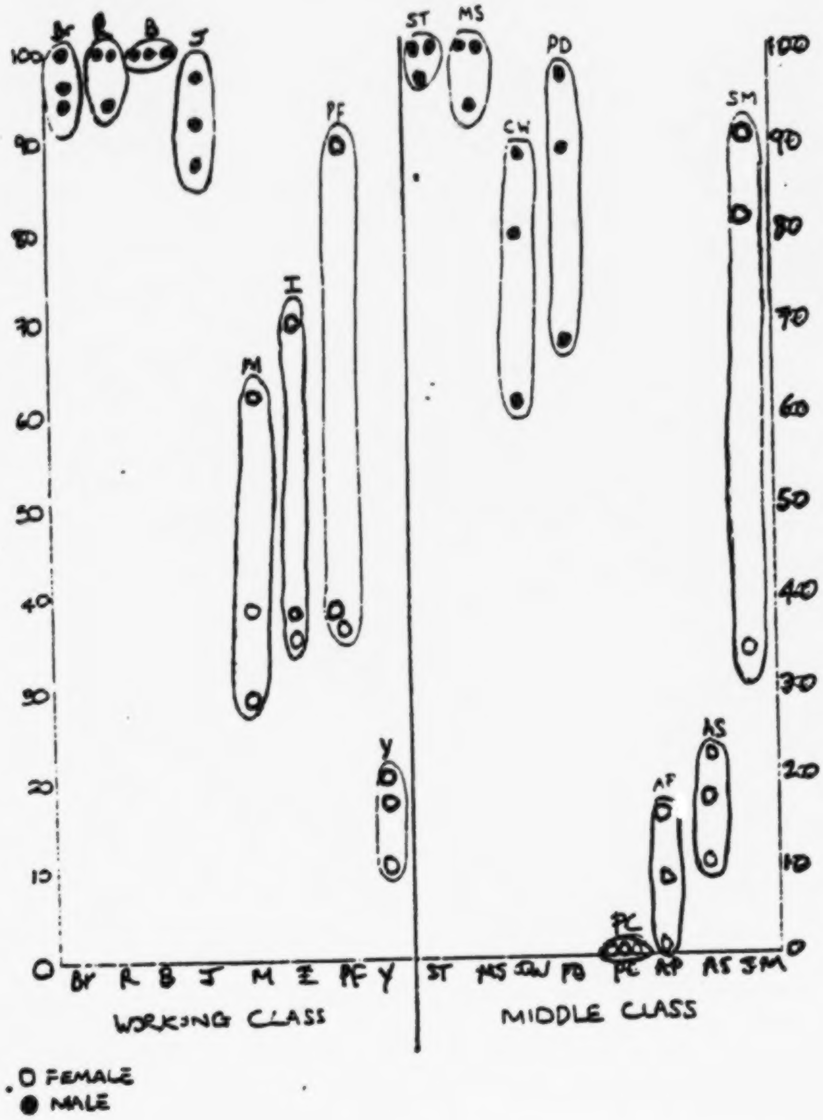


Figure 3.

Percentage of glottalised variants of (p), (t) and (k) in word-medial position in the spontaneous speech of 16 Tynesiders.



reveals a very clearly female pattern with respect to this type of distribution even though she seems an atypical female speaker if we confine our attention to the stylistic information on Figure 2. Figure 3 suggests that there may be a lot more to say about male/ female differences in the use of key social variables than is revealed by a simple frequency count.

Interesting as these Tyneside data are, I would not want to ascribe to sex as a speaker variable any particular primacy in accounting for phonological variation, with class running a poor second. In fact a more recent supplementary pilot study of the language of these same sixteen speakers with respect to a number of *vowel* variables (see Turner 1988) shows clearly that while some vowels do pattern primarily by class of speaker, others seem particularly sensitive to style. We are at the moment looking at the suggestion that consonant variables are more likely than vowel variables to function as sex markers (see Figure 1 above, and also the distributional patterns of the Belfast (th) variable (Milroy and Milroy 1978) for some support for this notion). Whether or not this turns out to be the case, I think we have to accept the more general sociolinguistic principle that speakers use language to align themselves with others - and indeed to differentiate themselves - along several sometimes intersecting dimensions. Fragments of the language which we call linguistic variables are used for this social purpose. However, while it is sometimes the case that the same fragment marks out both sex and class differences, thus fulfilling a multiple social function, it can also happen (and this is the important point) that these two tasks are carried out by *different* variables. One of our findings in Belfast indeed was that variables did not appear always to have the same social function; sometimes they seemed to function as network markers, sometimes as sex markers, sometimes as both. So it seems that individual linguistic variables can have one social function or more than one. If we admit this general principle, it seems misguided to develop a sociolinguistic theory which attempts to explain linguistic sex differences in terms of class; certainly it does not seem rational to account for the interacting effect of sex and class by invoking some stereotyped notion of the status consciousness of women.

Differences between communities in what we might call a division of sociolinguistic labour (in the context of this paper, differences in the effects of class and sex upon language variation) can be demonstrated dramatically by comparing the material we are familiar with from New York City and Norwich not only with the Tyneside data presented here, but more exotically some data recently collected in a sociolinguistic study in the township of Rades, Tunis (Jabeur 1987). One of the Arabic variables studied here involved alternation between monophthongal and diphthongal realisations of the items /aj/ and /aw/. The diphthongised variants (as opposed to the monophthongs /i:/ and /u:/) are described as 'markers of old urban female speech' (Jabeur 1987:192). Examples cited are /bajt/: /bi:t/ 'a room'; /nawm/:/nu:m/ 'sleep' (Jabeur 1987:110). Older women appear to be proud of using these markers in their speech, while the younger women use the monophthongised variants which are characteristic of male speech. Observations gathered during field work suggest that the older women consciously view the diphthongised variants as distinctively female, while young women are actually laughed at for attempting to use forms which identify the speaker as being old and coming from the centre of Tunis. The interesting but perhaps not entirely surprising point here however is that the social value attached to these female variants is not associated with their presence in Modern Standard Arabic. All of these women are uneducated or minimally educated and in fact we probably need to take into account a different set of cultural categories which allow the older women to be specified as a distinct group.

The hazards of oversimplifying or overgeneralising the significance of the relationship between class-based prestige and sex-marking in language are further demonstrated when Jabeur broadens his focus to include variation in the French spoken by bilingual Tunisians. Analysing one highly salient variable (R), he finds alternation between a uvular fricative and an alveolar trill, the uvular fricative being the Standard French variant. Interestingly however, women variably use the French variant, while men never use it. Thus, variability correlates only with sex, not with educational or occupational social dimensions. What seems to be happening is that the men are using a variant which identifies them clearly as Tunisian, while the women are going for a French identity. Jabeur suggests that the symbolism of this French variant is one of 'education, modernity and above all female emancipation ' (1987:206).

The women's focus on the French variant cannot however be said to be associated with prestige in any simple and straightforward way. This is because the broader focus offered by an examination of a range of morphosyntactic variables of Arabic (alternating between Standard and dialect) reveals a stratification according mainly to educational level, but not according to sex (Jabeur 1987:207). This is the converse of the (R) distribution, and suggests strongly that while speakers of both sexes are focussing on these Arabic variables to mark prestige, they use French variables to mark out gender. Unlike the situation in many western cities studied by sociolinguists where the same bits of the language do both jobs, we find in Tunis a division of labour between Arabic and French, structurally parallel to the division of labour between the glottal and vowel variables in Tyneside. In both Tunis and Tyneside, it is difficult to generalise on sociolinguistic patterns associated with only a small number of variables, without taking account of the wider picture.

In view of the current state of the art I can do little more here than suggest that approaches other than the classic Labovian one to the relationship between language and sex are surely possible. For example, one might reasonably take as a starting point the observation that the characteristic occupations of men and of women are distinctly different, as are the kinds of relationships with co-employees associated with them. So also are the general patterns of informal social relationships contracted by men and by women (see further Milroy 1987). Cheshire (1982) finds the same differences between male and female adolescents, reporting that among the females differences in language use correlate most closely with degree of conformity to mainstream values. This is quite a different variable from social class. Yet another avenue of explanation might develop from a comparison of certain properties of the language of caretakers of young children (who are usually women) with the language of women generally (Snow 1986).

I shall not attempt here to pursue alternative explanations, but will conclude on an optimistic note by suggesting one particular direction in which we [illegible] can begin to make fruitful progress. As I have attempted to argue elsewhere (Milroy 1988) it is possible to bring together various findings on differences in discourse patterns between the sexes with the findings of Labovian sociolinguistics, which until now, have been viewed as entirely different enterprises (but see Lavandera 1982 for an exception). What I hope is clear however from my contribution to this volume in honour of R.B. Le Page is that the breadth of focus characteristic of his work is sorely needed if we are ever to make any progress in understanding the widespread, and indeed perhaps universal, phenomenon of linguistic sex-marking.

## REFERENCES

Cameron, D. and Coates, J. (1985) Some problems in the sociolinguistic explanation of sex differences. Language and Communication 5,3: 143-51.

Cheshire, J. (1982) Variation in an English Dialect: a Sociolinguistic Study. Cambridge: CUP.

Coates, J. (1986) Women, Men and Language. London: Longman.

Cowhig, M. (1986) A quantitative analysis of phonological variables in the speech of Newcastle schoolchildren. Unpublished dissertation, Dept of Speech, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Gal, S. (1979) Language Shift. New York: Academic Press.

Horvath, B. (1985) Variation in Australian English: the sociolects of Sydney. Cambridge: CUP.

Le Page, R.B. and Tabouret-Keller A. (1985) Acts of Identity. Cambridge: CUP.

Jabeur, M. (1987) A sociolinguistic study in Tunisia, Rades. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Reading.

Labov, W. (1966) Social Stratification of English in New York City. Washington D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Lavandera, B. (1982) Le principe de réinterpretation dans la théorie de la variation. In Dittmar, N. and Schlieben-Lange B.

(eds) Die Soziolinguistik in romanischsprachigen Ländern. Narr: Tübingen.

Milroy, L. (1987) Language and Social Networks (2nd. editition). Oxford, Blackwell.

Milroy, L. (1988) New perspectives on the analysis of sex differentiation in language. Paper presented at the First Hong Kong Conference on Language and Society, University of Hong Kong.

Milroy, J. and Milroy, L. (1978) Belfast: change and variation in an urban vernacular. In P.Trudgill (ed) Sociolinguistic Patterns in British English. London: Arnold.

Rigg, L. (1987) A quantitative study of sociolinguistic patterns of variation in adult Tyneside speakers. Unpublished dissertation, Dept of Speech, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Schatz, H. (1986) Plat Amsterdams in its Social Context: a Sociolinguistic Study of the Dialect of Amsterdam. Amsterdam: P.J. Meertens-Institut.

Snow, C. (1986) Conversations with children. In Fletcher, P. and Garman, M. (eds) Language Acquisition. Cambridge: CUP.

Turner, M. (1988) A quantitative study of sociolinguistic patterns of vowel variation in adult Tyneside speakers. Unpublished dissertation, Dept of Speech, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Wells, J.C. (1982) Accents of English: an Introduction. Vol.2: The British Isles. Cambridge: CUP.

# There's no tense like the present: Verbal *-s* inflection in early Black English*

Shana Poplack
Sali Tagliamonte

University of Ottawa

## 1.0. Introduction

The verbal paradigm has frequently been used in crosslinguistic comparison to explore underlying grammatical relationships between dialects. Vernacular Black English (VBE) has perhaps received the most attention in this regard, particularly as part of an ongoing program to establish whether its synchronic form has developed from a prior creole or from Standard American English (SAE).

Thus in two of the most widely studied areas of the verb system, past-tense expression and copula usage, investigators have shown, through comparison with varieties of White English (and in some cases English-based creoles), that the underlying systems of VBE and SAE are similar in featuring the (same) copula and past-tense markers, though some of their surface manifestations are variably removed from VBE by the application of phonological and grammatical rules which can themselves be viewed as extensions of those operative in SAE (Labov et al. 1968, Labov 1969, Wolfram 1969, 1974; Fasold 1971, 1972; Pfaff 1971, Baugh 1980, Poplack and Sankoff 1987, Tagliamonte & Poplack, in press). The extent to which the results of these independent studies replicated each other was striking; they were in large part responsible for Labov's observation (1982:178-9) that "by 1979, the field ... had reached a consensus about the nature and origin of Black English".

In the area of verbal concord, however, very different and controversial interpretations obtain. In Standard English the present tense is not inflected morphologically, except on verbs with third person singular subjects. These categorically receive the affix *-s*, traditionally referred to as the verbal agreement or number concord marker. Earlier studies of VBE *-s* inflection, including several of those cited above, found that in contrast to Standard English, *-s* occurred variably not only on third singular verbs, but on verbs of other persons as well. Though the category of present tense was not explicitly rejected as part of the VBE grammar, it was considered not to require overt inflectional marking in the dialect (e.g. Fasold 1972:122). Cases of 3rd p. sg. *-s* deletion could thus be analyzed as regularization of a Standard English present-tense paradigm containing a redundant marker. However, the sporadic appearance of *-s* elsewhere raised the question of the function of this vagrant morpheme. As will be detailed below, two decades of research have not led to a consensus on the nature, let alone existence, of such a function, nor of its origin

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 237-277
© the authors

as an incompletely acquired Standard English present-tense marker or as a remnant from an earlier plantation creole. Most speculations on the origin of the form have been based on inferences from synchronic variation, though there have been some studies of historical texts (Schneider 1983; Brewer 1986; Pitts 1981, 1986). In this paper we propose to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon by systematically examining the behaviour of verbal *-s* in two data sets on early Black English as represented by tape-recorded interviews with 1) English-speaking residents of the peninsula of Samaná (Dominican Republic) and 2) the Ex-Slave Recordings housed in the Library of Congress. In so doing, we will be led to draw comparisons where possible with other dialects of Black and White English (both British and American) which show parallel variability, as well as with known facts from the history of the language. Though our early Black English data in (1) show the same apparently irregular distribution of *-s* attested in previous studies of contemporary VBE, featuring variable occurrence of verbal *-s* with subjects of all persons and numbers (1a)[1] even in the speech of the same individual, as well as on non-finite verbs and invariant *be* (1b), our analyses suggest that its conditioning is more consistent with what (little) is known about the behaviour of this marker in (early and modern) White English than with English-based creoles or contemporary VBE. This will corroborate our earlier independent findings on the grammar of Samaná English (Poplack and Sankoff 1987, Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press).

(1a) SINGULAR:

1st p. When I *pray*, I *pray* for everybody who's in danger. (03/1276)[2]
I *prays* for the people. (03/1247)

I *says* "why?" "Oh," he *says*, "it make too much noise". I *say*, "well does the Bible say make a noise over Jesus?" (ESR/FH/449-450)

2nd p. You *know* her, yes. (14/175)
You *knows* one. (14/269)

3rd p. And sometimes she *go* in the evening and *come* up in the morning. (05/232)
She *goes* to town every morning and *comes* up in the evening. (05/231)

PLURAL:

1st p. We *parch* it. (21/563)
We *parches* the coffee. (21/560)

They said,"we *wants* to raise you as an intelligent nigger. We *wants* you to have good friends like we have got."[3] (ESR/JM/7-9)
We *celebrate* that day. (ESR/LS/218)

3rd p. They *write* me still. (11/1148)
But still it's me they *writes*. (11/1149)

They treating me right now that *knows* me, they treating me nice. (ESR/AG/27-8)
And they all treating me mighty nice, all the white folks that *know* me, they treats me nice. (ESR/AG/32-4)

(1b) NON-FINITE:

You'll put the rice on the fire and *cooks* it. (8/354)
I don't hardly *walks* out. I don't hardly *walks* out nowhere. (17/198)
'Cause I gotta *makes*, you know, exercise. (3/708)
The church *bes* crammed down with people. (19/215)

## 2.0. Previous analyses of Black English -*s*

Several competing analyses have been proposed for the behaviour of verbal -*s*: in what follows we briefly recapitulate some of the arguments.

## 2.1. Hypercorrection

Early research suggests that verbal -*s* has no grammatical function in VBE, and is inserted irregularly in "odd, unpredictable and idiosyncratic positions" (Labov et al. 1968:165), i.e. in persons other than third, as well as in the non-finite contexts listed in (1b) above. Three types of evidence have been adduced in favour of this characterization (Labov et al. 1968, Wolfram 1969, Fasold 1972):

i) the uninflected verb was found to be the predominant form in the third singular in VBE, undergoing deletion at far greater rates than monomorphemic or plural -*s* (Labov et al. 1968:164)[4],

ii) -*s* variability was not generally affected by style shifting (Labov et al. 1968:164), especially among younger speakers[5] and, most important,

iii) -*s* deletion was not subject to the regular phonological conditioning found in studies of deletion of other final consonants.

"Hyper-*s*"[6] usage was described by Bickerton (1975:134) in relation to English-based creoles as "tacking on a morpheme which [a speaker] knows is characteristic of the standard language but which he has not yet learnt to use correctly". Consistent with this interpretation, nonconcord -*s* in VBE has been shown to evidence considerable variability across individuals, though apparently affected by extra-linguistic factors: it is least characteristic of educated, formal, middle-class adult speech. Its "irregular and unsystematic character" (Labov et al. 1968:167) suggests that the behaviour of 3rd p. sg. -*s* does not represent an extension of the regular rules of Standard English, as is the case of the copula and the past-tense morpheme, but is the result of external norms and overt social pressures. Myhill and Harris (1986:31) propose that -*s* may have been reinterpreted as a purely stylistic or accommodative device for rendering one's speech more suitable for interaction with speakers of Standard English.

Moreover, Fasold's (1972) analyses of possible nonphonological constraints on 3rd p. sg. *-s* absence, such as collective vs. noncollective subject, showed no significant effect. The only constraint to emerge was one promoting deletion on the second member of a conjoined verb phrase (see also Myhill and Harris 1986:28) which Fasold attributes to the "rapid onset of a fatigue factor" (p. 130). These facts, taken together, do not support a characterization of *-s* (whether concord or nonconcord) as an integral part of the vernacular grammar.

## 2.2. Aspectual marker

A second interpretation is that verbal *-s* is neither random in use nor the result of "unstable acquisition" of SAE present-tense marking, but an aspectual feature which marks durative (Jeremiah 1977, Pitts 1981, Brewer 1986) or habitual (Roberts 1976, Pitts 1986) aspect. Under this analysis, the variable occurrence of *-s* and -Ø in the same syntactic environment would be due to the fact that each form has a distinct semantic function. Brewer (1986:131) observes that many blacks report a contrast between the examples in (2):

(2a) If I liveØ in Boone ... I have just moved there.
(2b) If I live*s* in Boone ... I have lived there a long time.

These researchers accept the conclusion that VBE has no present-tense marker but eschew the assumption (Labov et al. 1968, Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972) that *-s* is a hypercorrect intrusion from SAE. VBE *-s* is rather an "adoption of a Standard English form without the Standard English grammatical component" (Pitts 1981:304).

Bickerton's brief (1975) examination of number concord in Guyanese Creole reveals the same sporadic distribution of third singular *-s* noted in the early studies of VBE. He suggests that some puzzling facts about nonconcord *-s* in that dialect might be clarified by taking into account the creole aspectual category [-punctual]. According to him, contemporary variation in *-s* usage is one manifestation of a developmental phase in the process of decreolization: as *doz* reduces to *-s* or *-z* in rapid speech, "the *-s* or *-z* remains in category but is simply transferred from pre- to post-verbal position". This *-s* would represent a hypercorrected version of *doz*, which occurs in environments that are [-punctual] (1975:136). Building on Bickerton's suggestion, Pitts (1981:307) analyzes *-s* as a relexification of habitual *de* found in Gullah (and presumably in an American plantation creole), brought about by means of a "transformation [in which] contracted *-s* from *is* replaces the verbal suffix of progression *-ing*, and the durative aspect is maintained".

Although these analyses differ somewhat in their derivation of the form, they generally concur that the function of *-s* is analogous to that of a creole-like pre-verbal aspectual marker which may have moved to post-verbal position under influence from Standard English.[7] Of course, in the process of decreolization, dialect mixture of creole and SAE categories may result. Indeed, Pitts argues for two *-s* in VBE, a tense marker and an aspect marker (1986:76)[8], encoded as a single surface form with different meanings and functions within the same system.

### 2.3. Verbal agreement marker

For at least some black speakers, verbal *-s* marks agreement with 3rd p. sg. subjects in favourable social contexts (and presumably, preferentially in certain linguistic environments as well, though these remain unspecified). This is implicit in Wolfram's and Fasold's figures for black middle-class adults (who arguably are no longer vernacular speakers), but is also discernable, though weakly, even in the "deep vernacular" speech studied by Myhill and Harris (1986:31). Exploitation of *-s* in this function would depend on a speaker's knowledge of the (SAE) system and her desire to accommodate to it.

### 2.4. Synchronic dialectal remnant

Schneider (1983) suggests that verbal *-s* is neither a post-creole importation from Standard English in the third person, nor a case of hypercorrection in other persons, but simply a continuation of the tendency prevalent throughout the history of English to mark (or fail to mark) *-s* across the verbal paradigm (see also McDavid (1969, 1977), McDavid and Davis (1972) Feagin (1979:196) and section (4.0) below).

Contra the creole-origin position, Schneider reasons (p. 104) that if the inflectional system of contemporary VBE derived from an earlier suffixless system, with occurrences of *-s* due to hypercorrection or convergence with SAE during the process of decreolization, *-s* should occur infrequently, if at all, in earlier black speech. His examination of the use of inflected and uninflected verbs in the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Slave Narratives (Federal Writers Project 1941) reveals exactly the opposite to be the case: *-s* appears with 72% of the 3rd p. sg. subjects, leading him to reject hypercorrection as an appropriate description of the phenomenon. However, he found *-s* to predominate in all other persons (with the exception of 2nd p. sg.) as well. Schneider suggests that the mixture of settlers from different dialect areas (specifically, Northern Britain, where the present-tense verbal paradigm has been characterized as having *-s* throughout, and Southern Britain, where -Ø is said to prevail) resulted in a mixed linguistic concord (or nonconcord) system characterized by variable but frequent use of *-s* (ibid.). One could thus expect regional differences in early Black English according to the origin of the majority of the settlers in a particular area, and in fact, Schneider's breakdown of the data by region shows high *-s* rates in all grammatical persons in the South Atlantic States, while in States situated to the west of the Mississippi (Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas), there is a tendency to approximate SAE, with -Ø predominating in all persons but 3rd p. sg. (pp. 104-105; this tendency is not mentioned, but may also be observed, in the data presented in Brewer 1986).

Schneider suggests two stages in the development of the VBE *-s* inflection (pp. 106-107): in the first stage Black American slaves acquired the nonstandard inflectional system of their white linguistic models (itself a blend of two competing British English dialect systems), characterized by variable but predominant use of *-s* in all persons. At a later stage the growing influence of standardization led to a progressive decline of *-s* but this proceeded differentially according to region. This tendency would have affected not only persons where -Ø inflection is grammatical in the standard language, but *also* 3rd singular, by means of a hypercorrective (regularizing) movement toward less *-s* usage. This might also account for contemporary patterns of VBE verbal inflection.

### 2.5. Narrative present marker

Recent quantitative work on a Philadelphia dialect of VBE (Myhill and Harris 1986) offers yet another interpretation of the function of verbal *-s*. Observing that while VBE speakers do not have a subject-verb agreement rule[9], they note that widespread reports of the sporadic occurrence of *-s* nonetheless indicate general awareness of its existence. Thus the dialect would contain a morpheme which is clearly verbal, yet which lacks a transparent grammatical rôle. This situation allows for the possibility of *-s* being assigned some function. In their study of the distribution of verbal *-s* in narrative and other discourse of five VBE speakers, they found it to be associated with narrative clauses, regardless of person and number of the subject (p. 27). They conclude that a formerly grammatically empty inflection has been reinterpreted as a marker of Historical Present in narrative, and observe that while inflection on non-3rd p. sg. subjects has been reported for other English dialects, it has never been attested specifically as a marker of narrative clauses (p. 30). Thus they view this usage as an innovation, made possible by the existence of an inflection with no clear grammatical function. Though their study is limited to only five speakers, they suspect that the phenomenon is in fact much more widespread, having gone unobserved by linguists because of data collection situations in which the social function of *-s* (that of accommodation to white interviewers) obscured its linguistic function. Indeed, Labov (1985) points to the reinterpretation of *-s* as a grammatical device as the "single strongest piece of evidence" that VBE is diverging from SAE.

### 3.0. Conflicting Analyses

The discussion in section (2.0) above gives some indication of the extent of the controversy concerning the precise status of verbal *-s* in VBE. The central question — that of its origin and function in the grammar — is given four different answers:

1) *-S* does not have a grammatical function in the dialect. Its occurrence is irregular and is not governed by internal grammatical constraints, but rather by the exterior norms and overt social pressures exerted by SAE. It is a case of hypercorrection (Labov et al. 1968, Wolfram 1969, Fasold 1972).

2) At an earlier stage (and possibly now), *-s* had the grammatical function of marking habitual or durative aspect. Its occurrence is governed by an underlying creole grammar that is distinct from SAE (Bickerton 1975, Roberts 1976, Pitts 1981, 1986; also Brewer 1986).

3) At an earlier stage (and possibly now), *-s* had the grammatical function of marking present tense. Its occurrence was variable but not irregular, and stemmed from the mixture of contrasting marking patterns in the English dialects to which the early slaves were exposed (Schneider 1983).

4) In contemporary VBE *-s* has the function of marking Historical Present regardless of person and number of the subject. Its occurrence is variable but not irregular and is a recent innovation (Myhill and Harris 1986).

It might be supposed that with the benefit of careful examination of these analyses and of the linguistic evidence adduced in their favour (to which we have alluded only cursorily thus far; see below), it should be a simple matter to choose between them. Nothing could be farther from the case. One reason is that the approaches, data sets, and methodologies used by the authors differ considerably, often making it impossible to draw conclusions. Indeed, to our knowledge, no single aspect of linguistic variation has been so widely studied with so little progress toward reaching a consensus. Baugh (1987) has recently devoted an entire paper to precisely this point. By way of illustration it will be instructive to re-examine in more detail some of the findings cited above.

The most striking example of lack of comparability appears in two quantitative analyses of the same data base, the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives (Schneider 1983, Brewer 1986). Schneider reports that the *-s* suffix is not only the quantitatively dominant form in these data, but that of all persons, it is used most frequently with third singular, at a rate of 72%[10] (p. 103). Brewer, on the other hand, finds that the occurrence of *-s* with *non*-3rd p. sg. subjects is the rule rather than the exception, more than half of the examples occurring with 1st p. sg. Table 1 reproduces the quantitative data on which these conclusions are based.

**Table 1:** *-S* usage by person in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives (taken from Schneider 1983:105 and Brewer 1986:136)

| | | SINGULAR | | | PLURAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1<br>% | 2<br>% | 3<br>% | 1<br>% | 3<br>% |
| South Carolina | Schneider 1983 | 54.4 | 45.0 | 70.5 | — | 70.2 |
| | Brewer 1986 | 65.0 | 21.9 | 4.0 | 1.6 | 7.3 |
| Texas | Schneider 1983 | 47.3 | 25.0 | 75.0 | — | 50.0 |
| | Brewer 1986 | 50.8 | 0 | 19.9 | 15.0 | 14.3 |

In comparing these figures, we observe that while Schneider also finds 1st p. sg. to be marked about half the time, it is by no means the most frequently marked person in the paradigm. How can this discrepancy be explained? Schneider calculated the proportion of *-s* out of all inflected *and* uninflected verbs in each person, while Brewer analyzed only what percentage of the inflected verbs (i.e. *-s* presence) was associated with each person. The figures are thus not comparable: only the former provide us with information on the *propensity* of a grammatical person to receive marking.[11]

Brewer further reports that *-s* functions in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives as a durative marker. This emerges from examining the co-occurrence of *-s* with temporal adverbs: of 153 instances of *-s* in the immediate environment of a temporal adverb, 67% of those adverbs were continuous or durative. Since this analysis again neglects to take account of the distribution of uninflected verbs, the results are difficult to interpret. That more instances of *-s* appeared in durative contexts may simply reflect the fact that such contexts themselves occur more frequently than others. Indeed, consideration of 200 Standard English present-tense sentences[12] (which evidence no variation in verbal concord), reveals that durative/continuous contexts make up nearly half the environments in which present tense is found (Table 2):

**Table 2:** **Distribution of aspectual contexts in which Standard English present tense is used**

| ASPECT | % | N |
|---|---|---|
| Durative/continuous | 46.5 | 93 |
| Habitual/iterative | 28.0 | 56 |
| Punctual | 20.5 | 41 |

Similarly, when we reanalyze our own data on early Black English according to Brewer's method (i.e. by charting the distribution of *-s* across aspectual contexts), we also find the misleading result that more *-s* occur in durative environments (Table 3).

**Table 3:** **Distribution of *-s* (proportion of *-s* out of all *-s*) in various aspectual contexts in Early Black English**

| | Samaná | | Ex-Slave Recordings | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASPECT | % [*-s*] | N | % [*-s*] | N |
| Durative/continuous | 43.5 | 324 | 61.9 | 26 |
| Habitual/iterative | 40.8 | 304 | 16.7 | 7 |
| Punctual | 15.6 | 116 | 21.4 | 9 |

However, as we will show in section (7.3.2.1) below, when both *-s* *and* -Ø usage are treated, we find no particular propensity in either data set for *-s* to mark durative aspect.

Problems arising from selective analysis of the data may be illustrated graphically by yet another proposal for the aspectual function of *-s* (Pitts 1986). Though he offers no quantitative data in support, Pitts contends that *-s* is a habitual marker, not only in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives, but also in contemporary VBE. The latter conclusion emerges from his re-examination of a segment of Labov's (1968) data, reproduced below for convenience.

Vernon: But those police don't really wanta break it up; they just *wants* their share. That cop **hang** out in our hall cause it's warm, but that's how he in on the numbers.

Reggie: When things *gets* bad, the lieutenant **get** wind of something: he **get** mad and **say**, "There's gonna be no more numbers". Then they *starts* bringin' peoples in. They don't really wanta bring you in; they *throws* you out by nine in the morning.

Richard: My mother says [sic] you'd think colored cops [would] be nicer than the white cops, but they just about the same. But we *needs* police. They *protects* you from the big kids that **throw** the rocks, **make** your eye go out.

Vernon: No one person owns [sic] the numbers. And when you win, they *comes* on your street and *tells* you.
(from Pitts 1986:79)

Pitts claims that *-s* usage in these data illustrates an association between the marker and verbs denoting habitual action (italicized in Pitts 1986). This is in fact basically true (two of the *-s* marked contexts are actually durative: *wants, needs*), but a review of the *uninflected* verbs in the same passage (which we indicate in bold face) reveals that these too denote habitual (or iterative) aspect![13]

Pitts (1986:76) further suggests that *-s* incorporates a dual function — that of tense marker and that of aspect marker, labelled "tense-z" and "aspectual-z" respectively (see also Roberts 1976). By tabulating the *-s* markers found in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives, he finds that once the two "grammatical" (i.e. tense and aspect) *-s* are accounted for, only 25 instances (8%) of unsystematic ("hyper") *-s* remain. (Again there is no comparison of the distribution of uninflected verbs.) Since, as mentioned above, these two functions are encoded in the same surface form, the question arises as to how they can be distinguished. Pitts suggests that *-s* is a tense marker when it 1) occurs in a series with other past-tense verbs, or 2) is immediately preceded by a past-tense adverbial construction, and when its temporal reference is not anterior to that of a preceding verb. *-S* is an aspect marker when it occurs with 1) stative verbs not collocated with a punctual adverb, and 2) event or process verbs used in habitual contexts. He observes (p. 76) that "in order to keep the two functions of *-z* separate, the aspectual and tense *-z* do not seem to occur in the same syntactic phrase".

Without addressing the circularity of this definition, note that the "tense-z" alluded to by Pitts appears to encompass past temporal reference only; 3rd p. sg *-s* is of course also used in Standard English to mark present temporal reference, of which no mention is made.[14] Moreover, "since the present tense is essentially used to describe, rather than to narrate, it is essentially imperfective, either continuous or habitual" (Comrie 1976:66). Indeed, in many languages, including English, habitual aspectual meaning is *encoded* in the present tense. It therefore seems unlikely that the figures given by Pitts for "aspectual-z" and "tense-z" in the slave narratives (1986:77) in fact correspond to mutually exclusive usages, since they probably reflect the distinction between Historical Present and other present contexts.

Thus previous contentions to the effect that the function of *-s* is that of an aspectual marker cannot be assessed from the available data.

## 4.0. Historical precursors of *-s* variability

Though contemporary prescriptive usage requires strict subject-verb agreement in the present indicative, the historical record shows that concord was not always categorical.

Modern English *-s* is generally considered a reflex of Old English -þ, which marked present indicative in 3rd p. sg. and all persons in the plural (e.g. Jespersen 1909/49:15).[15] One of the chief characteristics of the transition between Old English and Middle English verbal forms is the gradual loss of many of the older verbal endings. By the Middle English period, inflection in the present indicative was basically uniform across the paradigm, though the choice of marker varied across dialects. This can be observed in the verbal paradigm for Middle English *hēre(n)* 'to hear', reproduced in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Regional distribution of verbal inflections in Middle English (from Mossé 1952:78)

| | North | Midlands | South |
|---|---|---|---|
| Singular | | | |
| 1st p. | hēr(e)(s)[16] | hēre | hēre |
| 2nd p. | hēres | hēres(t) | hēr(e)st |
| 3rd p. | hēres | hēres, hēreþ | hēreþ |
| Plural | hēres | hēres, hēre(n) | hēreþ |

Use of verbal *-s* for all persons and numbers was apparently a dialectal feature of Northern English (e.g. Wright 1905:175-6, Jespersen 1909/1949:16, Strang 1970:146). It was here, according to Curme (1977:52), that the original 2nd p. sg. verbal ending *-s* spread first to 2nd p. pl., then to other persons of the plural, and finally to 3rd p. sg., so that in the Old English period, *-s* was (variably) used in the North for all persons and numbers but 1st sg. By Middle English, it appeared throughout the paradigm. At this time it spread geographically to the Midlands where it coexisted with -þ in 3rd p. sg. and occurred variably in the plural. Later the *-s* inflection became established in London and in the South more generally, first affecting only the spoken language, and subsequently penetrating written styles. Literary use of *-s* to represent popular or informal speech is amply attested. Shakespeare employed it in colloquial prose, while -þ was used categorically in the more serious style required for Bible translations (Curme 1977:53). By the early 17th century *-s* gradually became established in all styles of literary language, but only in the 3rd p. sg.[17], rather than throughout the paradigm, as in Northern English. This development, undoubtedly responsible for the contemporary form of the Standard English indicative present-tense paradigm, was nonetheless preceded by considerable variation in written texts (cf. Holmqvist 1922, Curme 1977), generally agreed to have derived from parallel variation in the spoken language.

Though historians are not in total agreement either on the exact origin of verbal *-s* (whether it arose through sound change from -þ (v. Holmqvist 1922:2) or through analogical extension (ibid.:3, Wardale 1937:101, Wakelin 1977:119), or on the reasons for its replacement of -þ (because it increased the number of rhymes available for poetry (Jespersen 1909/49:16)), or because it was more easily articulated (ibid.:17), there is general consensus on a number of points.

1) Alternation among inflections (including *-s*, -þ and -Ø) of the present indicative has been a longstanding, well-documented feature of the language since the Old English period (Jespersen 1909/49:16, Holmqvist 1922:15, Brunner 1963:70, Curme 1977:53, Wakelin 1977:119).

2) The variation originated in colloquial speech, and subsequently passed into the written language (Jespersen 1909/49:17-18, Holmqvist 1922:159, Wyld 1927:256, Curme 1977:53).

3) Competing marking patterns in the indicative present-tense paradigm were regional variants. In fact, the verbal *-s* inflection has been considered one of the safest criteria in determining the dialectal origin of a Middle English text (Jespersen 1909/49:76-79, Holmqvist 1922:72, Wardale 1937:102, Barber 1976:242, Curme 1977:53, Wakelin 1977:119)

4) Until at least the early 17th century *-s* was apparently a marker of popular, colloquial or dialectal speech (Jespersen 1909/49:19, Holmqvist 1922:185, Strang 1970:146, Barber 1976:239, Curme 1977:53)

In view of such pervasive variability, apparent even from the historical record, it is most likely that at least some aspects of the linguistic and/or social environments exerted a regular influence on *-s* occurrence. Unambiguous reconstruction of these factors and their respective weights is far beyond the scope of this paper; fortunately, there do exist reports of at least two syntactic conditioning factors.

One widely attested constraint involves the type of subject of the verb. From the Middle English period on, there has been a tendency throughout England for verbs to retain inflection when accompanied by a full NP subject, while verbs with pronominal subjects, especially when post-posed, have tended to remain uninflected (e.g. Brunner 1963:70-71). This pattern has spread to all persons in many modern British dialects (Wright 1905:176, Jespersen 1909/49:15, Wakelin 1977:119).

Another involves the definiteness of the subject. In Modern Standard English the inflected form of the verb is prescribed after indefinite pronominal subjects (e.g. *everybody, nobody, anyone*, etc.); in older English the uninflected form was common in these contexts, as they were often interpreted as plurals (Visser 1970:74, Curme 1977:51-52); this tendency has also persisted in popular modern speech (Kennedy 1970:497).

## 5.0. -*S* variability in Modern English

The vigorous variation in -*s* usage throughout the history of English coupled with the dearth of reports of parallel phenomena in modern white usage would suggest that the variability has by now resolved itself in contemporary White English in favour of the standard prescriptive variant: -*s* in 3rd p. sg. only. However, Hughes and Trudgill (1979:16-17) observe that in a number of non-standard British (particularly East Anglian) dialects, the present-tense verbal paradigm is completely regular as a result of the absence of 3rd p. sg. -*s*. In the North of Britain, as well as in the Southwest and South Wales, the regularization is of the opposite kind, with -*s* occurring in all verbal persons. Indeed, Trudgill (1974:61) describes 3rd p. sg. -*s* agreement as a linguistic variable involved in very marked social as well as stylistic variation. Table 5 reproduces his proportions of 3rd p. sg. -*s* agreement in Norwich.

**Table 5.** % of 3rd p. sg. -*s* agreement in Norwich (from Hughes and Trudgill 1979:204)

| Social Class | % |
|---|---|
| Upper Middle Class | 100 |
| Lower Middle Class | 71 |
| Upper Working Class | 25 |
| Middle Working Class | 19 |
| Lower Working Class | 3 |

The lower-working class informants in his study show almost categorical lack of subject-verb concord, with very little style-shifting. In fact, the overall norm for the working class is less than 30% concord. It is interesting to note, however, that even middle-class speakers fail to observe concord in casual speech nearly a third of the time[18]. In Reading, on the other hand, as in many other southwestern varieties of British English, Cheshire (1982) found categorical use of -*s* in 3rd p. sg., but it also occurred more than half of the time in other verbal persons in the speech of the young peer groups she studied (p.

32). Strikingly enough, even the formal speech of the elderly speakers in her sample showed nonconcord *-s* usage 30% of the time.

There have been several anecdotal reports of both lack of subject-verb concord and nonconcord *-s* in white American dialects (McDavid 1969, McDavid & Davis 1972, McDavid 1972) as well as some quantitative studies (Wolfram 1971, Feagin 1979, Sommer 1986). The phenomenon has thus far only been reported in the Southern U.S., which has been considered to be least prone, until recently, to standardizing influences (McDavid 1969, Schneider 1983). Not surprisingly, those studies that have investigated linguistic conditioning of *-s* usage, find remnants of the effects cited in the historical record. For example, though Feagin (1979:190) finds that 3rd p. pl. pronominal subjects in Anniston (Alabama) English always receive the standard -Ø mark, nonagreement (i.e. nonstandard *-s* usage) reaches 58.4% among rural informants when the subject is a full noun phrase. Hackenberg (1973, cited in Feagin 1979) found up to 69% nonagreement in this context in West Virginia.

It is thus apparent that the accumulated body of research has not furnished a consensus on the origins, status, or function(s) of verbal *-s* in Vernacular Black English. In the remainder of this paper, we explore empirically the behaviour of this variable, paying particular attention to the linguistic and social contexts of its occurrence, within a historical and comparative perspective. This will enable us to determine whether the variation observed in early and modern Black English *-s* usage has a precedent in the history of the language, or is rather an intrusion from another system.

## 6.0. Data and methods

The data on which this report is based were extracted from two data sets. The first is a corpus of tape-recorded interviews with 21 native English-speaking descendants of American ex-slaves residing in Samaná. We consider the dialect of these informants, aged 71-103 in 1982, to derive from a variety of English spoken by American blacks in the early 1820's[19]. The second data set consists of 11 recordings of former slaves born between 1844 and 1861 (see Bailey et al., to appear), who presumably acquired their language some four or five decades after the ancestors of the Samaná informants.

From the tape-recorded interviews we extracted each verbal construction with the potential for variable *-s* or -Ø marking, totalling 2485 cases from the Samaná data base and 374 from the Ex-Slave Recordings[20]. Though we will attempt to provide explicit comparisons between the data sets where possible, it should be borne in mind that these may be vitiated by the paucity of data in the Ex-Slave Recordings[21].

## 6.1. Circumscribing the variable context

In order to examine the behaviour of verbal *-s* it was first necessary to delimit its context of occurrence.

Observing that verbal *-s* alternates with zero among all speakers in all persons[22] ( see (1a) above), we thus extracted from both corpora every construction containing what we determined to be a present-tense verb with the potential for inflection. Although this has not been explicitly addressed in the literature on this subject, the task of circumscribing the variable context for *-s* presents special difficulties. In particular, an independent process of consonant cluster simplification renders the surface forms of regular (weak) present- and past-tense verbs indistinguishable, as in (3):

(3) She *liveØ* (< [z] or [d]?) right up yonder. (05/224)
So she *gainØ* (< [z] or [d]?) half and I *gainØ* (< [z] or [d]?) half. (07/866)

Inclusion of past-tense verbs with phonologically deleted markers as instances of uninflected present-tense forms will obviously skew the proportions of *-s* presence (cf. Myhill and Haris 1986). We thus excluded from our data base all forms for which past reference could be inferred, whether from adverbial or other temporal disambiguating constructions, as in (4) and (5), from a sequential overt past-tense inflection, as in (6), or from the larger context of discourse[23].

(4) He remainØ here *three years*. (10/940)
He liveØ with mama thirty, thirty-two years ... (ESR/LS/339-40)

(5) I *used to live* down there, and where I liveØ I had all that coffee planted. (3/407).

(6) He *brought* me one and he remainØ with one. (3/1076)

In contrast to earlier studies of VBE which reported extensive use of verbal *-s* with non-finite constructions (e.g. questions, imperatives, modal + verb, negatives, non-finite and invariant *be*, etc.), we find these to be extremely rare or nonexistent in both the Samaná and Ex-Slave materials[24]. There have also been suggestions that lexical factors might exert an influence on *-s* usage (e.g. Labov et al. 1968, Fasold 1972). In the Samaná data all verbs seem to behave comparably with the exception of *got* and *say*, both of which received very little marking in concord and nonconcord positions[25]. Since exclusion of the former from our calculations did not materially affect the results, it was retained in the analysis; *say*, on the other hand, was excluded (v. fn. 38).

A number of constructions show no variability in *-s* usage (remaining categorically inflected or uninflected), and thus were excluded from further analysis. These include various frozen expressions (e.g. *you believe, I tell you*[26]), verbs occurring in songs or sayings, which may have been learned by rote, as in (7), phonologically neutralized sequences as in (8), and constructions with potential *have* or *would* deletion, as in (9) and (10).

(7) Practice *makes* perfect. (ESR/163/34)
(8) All these children *speak* Spanish. (07/2038)
(9) Since that, the sugar had went up even to thirty cents .. and it Ø *come* back now to twenty. (02/891)
(10) Any boat we met, if it was there, we Ø *sail* it (01/633)

We also excluded constructions containing verbs which are "inherently" ambiguous as to past or present reference (e.g. *put, set, beat*), as well as examples in which an unambiguous interpretation of temporal reference was in doubt. Although it is possible that there still remain some verbs which were not appropriately disambiguated by us, these would be few in number. Thus the analyses which follow provide a clear picture of the use of *-s* in contexts which (at least in Standard English) permit or require the present tense.

### 6.2. Coding and analysis

Each present-tense verb retained in the data base was coded for a series of phonological, morphological and syntactic factors which could have an effect on verbal *-s* expression. These included the underlying phonetic form of *-s* ([s, z or əz]), the surrounding phonological environment, features of the noun phrase, features of the verb, and syntactic and discourse features. These factors were first analyzed individually, and then simultaneously by means of GoldVarb (Sankoff 1988), a logistic regression package for the Macintosh computer.

For the statistical analyses we adopt here it is necessary to posit a relationship between variants which specifies the set of tokens assumed to have been eligible for rule application and the set of tokens assumed to have been transformed by the rule. The resulting configuration is often formalized in terms of certain underlying forms giving rise to weaker (or deleted) variants. This additional formalization is not necessary to estimate the effects of the different factors on variant usage, however. Since there is no consensus for determining which variant of verbal *-s* is underlying — whether [Ø] (which would imply that all occurrences of [s] are insertions) or [s] (implying that instances of [Ø] are deletions) — we simply adopted the standard English configuration as an operational tool. We distinguish 3rd p. sg. from all other contexts, and consider, for the purposes of the analysis, -Ø marked instances of the former to be cases of deletion, and *-s*-marked verbs in all other persons to be insertions. Note, however, that the analyses we will present do not depend on the particular derivational sequence we have postulated[27] (see also Poplack 1979:53ff.), and should not at this stage be interpreted as a theoretical claim for the underlying form of verbal *-s*.

## 7.0. Results

### 7.1. Distribution of *-s* across the verbal paradigm

Table 6 depicts the distribution of verbal *-s* presence by grammatical person in early Black English.

**Table 6.** Distribution of verbal *-s* by grammatical person in the Samaná and Ex-Slave Recordings

| | Samaná | | Ex-Slave Recordings | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N |
| **Singular** | | | | |
| 1st | 20 | 609 | 3 | 173 |
| 2nd | 7 | 414 | 0 | 59 |
| 3rd | 56 | 604 | 71 | 42 |
| **Plural** | | | | |
| 1st | 22 | 176 | (29 | 7)[28] |
| 2nd | (0 | 7) | (0 | 1) |
| 3rd | 31 | 675 | 5 | 92 |
| Totals | | 2485 | | 374 |

While in the Detroit and Washington studies verbal *-s* was generally absent from all forms (Wolfram 1969:138, Fasold 1972:133), sometimes occurring on 3rd p. sg. and sometimes[29] on other persons, the Samaná materials show *-s* to be *present* much of the time, particularly on 3rd p. sg., but also non-negligibly on 3rd p. pl. and 1st p. sg. and pl. Note that while these rates appear high in relation to the VBE materials studied in urban American contexts, they are substantially lower (in all persons) than those reported by Schneider (1983:103, 105) for the WPA Slave Narratives. On the other hand, we observe considerably more *-s* usage in Samaná than in the Ex-Slave Recordings, where, despite rather sparse data, *-s* is nonetheless virtually confined to 3rd p. sg. subjects[30]. Though the association of *-s* with 3rd p. sg. in the Ex-Slave Recordings is consistent with the onset of "standardization" described by Schneider, the differences in rate are more likely due to other factors which we are not in a position to assess (such as interviewer or transcriber effect (see Baugh 1987)). At this point, we note only that in each of the data sets *-s* is most likely to occur with 3rd p. sg., where it is present over half the time.[31] In ensuing sections we focus on the patterning of *-s* usage according to a number of factors, in order to address the question of its function in the two data sets.

### 7.2. Phonological effects on *-s* usage

One of the most widely accepted views concerning verbal *-s* inflection in dialects of Black English is that its occurrence is not phonologically conditioned. This finding constitutes the crux of the argument that verbal *-s* is not part of the underlying grammar of VBE. The conclusion is based on a view of language in which a set of syntactic rules generates forms on which phonological rules may subsequently operate. Thus, if random hypercorrection were entirely responsible for the non-3rd p. sg. *-s* forms and 3rd p. sg. -Ø forms, there should be no way of differentiating the phonological environments containing the two. If, on the other hand, the deleted variants result from the application of phonological rules to syntactically generated *-s* and -Ø, the distribution of these alternate forms may be expected to be influenced by the surrounding phonological environment.

### 7.2.1. Underlying Phonetic Form

Each token of verbal *-s* was coded for one of three phonetic manifestations whose occurrence is conditioned by the phonological features of the final segment of the base word: [s] occurs following non-strident voiceless segments, [z] following non-strident voiced segments and vowels, and [əz] following stridents. In studies of the past-tense morpheme, the phonetic shape of the suffix, with parallel variants [t, d, Id], was found to have a significant effect on the frequency of its deletion, the morpheme being deleted less when it was bisegmental. In the case of verbal *-s*, however, it has been claimed that phonetic shape has little or no effect on retention of *-s* (e.g. Fasold 1971:361). Table 7 displays the distribution of *-s* and -Ø across different base forms in early Black English.

**Table 7: Relationship of underlying phonetic form to *-s* usage**

| | /s/ | | /z/ | | /əz/ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3rd p. sg. Deletion (*-s* → -Ø)** | %Ø | N | %Ø | N | %Ø | N |
| Samaná | 50 | 212 | 44 | 365 | 7 | 27 |
| Ex-Slave Narratives | 33 | 15 | 23 | 26 | (0 | 1) |
| **Other than 3rd Insertion (-Ø → *-s*)** | %[*-s*] | N | %[*-s*] | N | %[*-s*] | N |
| Samaná | 21 | 830 | 21 | 974 | 31 | 77 |
| Ex-Slave Narratives | 4 | 117 | 3 | 207 | (0 | 8) |

The table shows that when the phonetic form of *-s* is [əz] it is retained more often on both third and non-third persons in Samaná English[32], showing the same pattern as that attested for the *-t,d* suffix. The bisegmental form of *-s* is most salient phonologically and thus it is reasonable that it should be retained more often.

### 7.2.2. Environmental factors

No previous study of verbal *-s* has recognized the existence of environmental phonological conditioning of its occurrence. Labov et al. (1968:164) report a surprising tendency for a following vocalic segment to *increase* deletion rates, contrary to widely replicated patterns for deletion of other final consonants. Wolfram

(1969:137) finds virtually identical deletion rates in intervocalic and interconsonantal environments. Fasold (1972:125) reports no significant effect of either preceding or following phonological segment. Table 8 examines the effect of phonological environment on verbal *-s* presence in early Black English.

**Table 8: Effect of preceding and following phonological environment on verbal *-s* presence**

| | **Preceding segment** | | | | **Following segment** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Vowel | | Consonant | | Vowel | | Consonant | | Pause | |
| **3rd p. sg. deletion (*s* → -Ø)** | %Ø | N | %Ø | N | %Ø | N | %Ø | N | %Ø | N |
| Samaná | 37 | 94 | 45 | 510 | 39 | 231 | 47 | 344 | 55 | 29 |
| Ex-Slaves | 11 | 9 | 33 | 33 | 30 | 27 | 29 | 14 | (0 | 1) |
| **non-3rd insertion (-Ø → -*s*)** | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N |
| Samaná | 27 | 315 | 20 | 1566 | 24 | 632 | 20 | 1184 | 31 | 65 |
| Ex-Slaves | 7 | 86 | 2 | 246 | 4 | 235 | 4 | 77 | 0 | 20 |

In contrast to the abovementioned studies of VBE, we observe a small but consistent phonological effect, in the expected direction[33]. A preceding vocalic segment promotes retention of *-s*, regardless of grammatical person, as has been found in studies of deletion of other final consonants (e.g. Labov et al. 1968:130). In the following context, a pause is least conducive to retention, as is also typical of *-t,d* deletion patterns among contemporary VBE speakers (Guy 1980:28). Moreover, the effect of phonological context is consistent across the majority of individual Samaná speakers for whom there is sufficient data in each environment. (Parallels to this patterning are clear in the Ex-Slave Recordings only for the preceding segment.) In fact, the ranking of following consonant versus vowel in the Samaná data is also mirrored in Fasold's (1972:127) analysis of 3rd p. sg. *-s* deletion among a subsample of pre-adolescent and adolescent males in Washington, and corroborated in his analysis of the effect of phonological sequence for all speakers[34].

In summary, looking at the phonological influences one by one, and without taking into account non-phonological factors, there appears to be a phonological effect on both concord and nonconcord *-s* usage in early Black English. On the one hand this is manifested as a tendency to preserve *-s* when it is bisegmental, and on the other, when it appears in non-consonantal environments. Though the latter effect is not unattested in earlier studies of this phenomenon in VBE, despite claims to the contrary, the consistency of this effect in concord *and* nonconcord contexts has not to our knowledge been observed. We will have occasion to return to this result below.

## 7.3. Syntactic effects on *-s* usage

While previous studies have either reported no phonological conditioning of *-s* or have not treated the issue at all, syntactic factors have been widely cited, even at earlier stages of the language (section 4.0). In this section we examine whether a number of constraints proposed in the literature may also account for *-s* variability in our data on early Black English.

### 7.3.1. Features of the subject

### 7.3.1.1. Type of subject

A widely cited syntactic condition on the occurrence of verbal *-s* is the propensity for -Ø marking following pronominal, as opposed to full NP, subjects (e.g. Sweet 1891:379, Wright 1905:176, Brunner 1963:70, Mossé 1952:79). Jespersen (1909/49:15) traces the origins of this constraint back to Old English, which subsequently gave rise to the Modern Scottish configuration. In this dialect *-s* is added in all persons so long as the subject is not pronominal: *they cum an' teake them* vs. *the burds cums an' paecks them* (ibid.). This pattern has also been noted for other present-day British (e.g. Midlands) dialects (Wakelin 1977:119). Thus, the trend toward more *-s* inflection with heavy NP subjects has been present from the inception of the verbal marking system to the present (Hackenberg 1973, Feagin 1979)[35].

We thus divided the subjects of the verbs under investigation according to whether they were pronominal, full or full noun phrase + relative, as in (11). Table 9 displays the effect of type of subject on verb inflection.

(11) *He* lives on the shore. (01/181)
And *my brother* lives in Limón. (06/1048)
*The one what he follows* has uh- sixty-three years. (04/318)

**Table 9. Rates of verbal *-s* usage as a function of type of subject**

| | Pronoun | | Full NP | | Full NP + rel | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3rd p. sg.** | | | | | | |
| **deletion -s → -Ø** | **%Ø** | **N** | **%Ø** | **N** | **%Ø** | **N** |
| Samaná | 45 | 441 | 45 | 114 | 29 | 49 |
| Ex-slaves | 27 | 26 | 27 | 26 | 31 | 16 |
| **non-3rd** | | | | | | |
| **insertion -Ø → -s** | **%[-*s*]** | **N** | **%[-*s*]** | **N** | **%[-*s*]** | **N** |
| Samaná | 20 | 1766 | 38 | 92 | 70 | 23 |
| Ex-slaves | 3 | 312 | 15 | 20 | — | 0 |

Although there is no difference in marking rates ascribable to pronominal vs. full NP subject in 3rd p. sg.

in either data set, we observe a marked tendency for verbs preceded by heavy noun phrases to receive inflection in other persons. Moreover, the heaviest NP context, i.e. NP + relative, most favours *-s* marking, an effect which has also been reported for nonstandard Southern White English (Feagin 1979:193) Although the rates of nonconcord in 3rd p. sg. contexts are actually lower in early Black English than those reported for contemporary white dialects (Hackenberg 1973, Feagin 1979), the patterning is identical, and replicates the historical attestations (see section 4.0).

### 7.3.1.2. Definiteness of the subject

Another constraint noted in the literature, primarily by researchers attributing *-s* variability to an underlying grammatical system distinct from standard English, is the differential treatment of indefinite vs. definite subjects. Bickerton (1975:137) suggests that the acquisition of 3rd p. sg. *-s* inflection on verbs with indefinite subjects would be inhibited in decreolizing Guyanese English, since these subjects are never marked in the underlying creole grammar. It has also been the case throughout the history of English that the verbs associated with some of these subjects have tended to lack inflection. Since the 18th century grammarians have frowned upon the prevalent misuse of verbal concord with grammatically singular indefinite pronominals (Visser 1970), cf. also the OED: "everyone: often incorrectly with plural verb", and "everybody: sometimes incorrectly with plural verb or pronoun". We thus distinguished indefinite subjects (including indefinite pronouns, e.g. *everything, it*, indefinite *you*; and noun phrases, e.g. *a boy, boys, people* etc.) as in (12a), from definite subjects, as in (12b).

(12a) *Nothing* worries me. (ESR/31/37)
*People* here now sing about "Roll, Jordan, Roll". (ESR/31/400)
*Everybody* knows. (ESR/40/30)

(12b) *The old people* likes to quarrel. (3/174)
I don't care whether *you* sing it or not. (ESR/31/426)
*Ma* knows them all. (ESR/38/311)

**Table 10. Rates of verbal *-s* usage as a function of definiteness of the subject**

| | Definite subject | | Indefinite subject | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3rd p. sg. deletion *-s* → -Ø** | %Ø | N | %Ø | N |
| Samaná | 43 | 478 | 48 | 126 |
| Ex-Slaves | 29 | 35 | (29 | 7) |
| **non-3rd insertion -Ø → -s** | %[*-s*] | N | %[*-s*] | N |
| Samaná | 26 | 1211 | 14 | 670 |
| Ex-slaves | 4 | 246 | 1 | 86 |

Table 10 in fact shows a slight tendency in both data sets (where data is sufficient) towards lesser use of *-s* with indefinite subjects, particularly in non-3rd p. sg. contexts. Note, however, that the constraint cited in the historical record appears to refer to indefinite *pronominals*, rather than to the feature of definiteness more generally. And in fact, when we examine the subclass of 3rd p. sg. indefinite pronominal subjects in the Samaná data in (13), the effects suggested by Table 10 are magnified, with 58% (N=26) deletion in this context.

(13) Everybody goe*s* out ... (18/934)
Everybody wantØ to be walking up and down. (18/933)
Everything changeØ. (05/651)
Everything change*s*. (09/320)

Thus, while it is clear that indefinites tend not to receive inflection, it seems likely that this stems rather from the historical tendency for indefinite pronouns to remain unmarked, than from an underlying creole influence.

#### 7.3.1.3. Collective vs. noncollective subject

Collective subjects have been observed to agree variably with the verb according to whether they are interpreted as singular or plural (Visser 1970:62, Traugott 1977:133). As there were no collective subjects in either of the data sets under examination, we were unable to investigate this effect.

### 7.3.2. Features of the verb

#### 7.3.2.1. Verbal aspect

The essence of the debate over the semantic interpretation of verbal *-s* concerns its aspectual reading. In modern standard English 3rd p. sg. *-s* marks present tense simultaneously with a range of aspectual meanings: punctual, durative/iterative, habitual, etc. In creole languages, where the underlying system is generally characterized as aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent, verbal marking is conditioned by the aspect of the verb. We have reviewed earlier suggestions (Bickerton 1975, Roberts 1977, Pitts 1981, 1986; Brewer 1986) that Black English *-s* is an aspectual marker, but the questions of 1) which aspect it marks and 2) the relationship of such behaviour to a prior creole grammar (over and above marking aspect at all) remain unresolved, largely because of the questionable way some of these conclusions were derived from the data. In this section we examine the tendency for *-s* marking according to the aspectual reading of the verb. Verbs were coded as punctual when they referred to an event (hypothetical or otherwise) which is understood to have occurred once, as in (14), as habitual/iterative when they referred to an event that takes place repeatedly, as in (15), and as durative/continuous when they referred to events or processes that are extended in time or states that exist continuously, as in (16). Note that this aspectual coding was based on contextual information (e.g. adverbials) and not solely on the verb itself.

(14) If she *comes* six o'clock in the morning, well, you have to be here eight o'clock to go. (10/770)
All at once, it- the rain *come*. (01/1250)

(15) Every year she *comes* here. (19/225)
People *comes* very often. (10/763)
Sometimes they *comes*. (03/1252)

(16) I think it *comes* by the teachers. (17/268)
The wire *come* from way out there. (11/961)
The Rodneys *come* from here in this Dominican Republic. (21/96)

Table 11 shows that, contrary to Brewer's (1986) contention, verbs tend to receive most *-s* marking when the aspect denoted by the verb is habitual, an effect which emerges most clearly in the Samaná data. Note, however, that this effect is most robust in 3rd p. sg. in both data sets (in the Ex-Slave Recordings there is little data on 3rd p. sg., and the effect disappears altogether in persons other than third). Can verbal *-s* then be characterized as an aspect marker? We return to this question in section (8.0) below.

**Table 11. Rates of verbal *-s* usage as a function of verbal aspect**

| | Habitual/Iterative | | Durative/Continuous | | Punctual | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3rd p. sg.** | | | | | | |
| **deletion *-s* → -Ø** | **%Ø** | **N** | **%Ø** | **N** | **%Ø** | **N** |
| Samaná | 27 | 150 | 50 | 347 | 50 | 107 |
| Ex-slave | 14 | 7 | 30 | 27 | 38 | 8 |
| **non-3rd** | | | | | | |
| **insertion -Ø → *-s*** | **%[*-s*]** | **N** | **%[*-s*]** | **N** | **%[*-s*]** | **N** |
| Samaná | 36 | 542 | 17 | 864 | 13 | 475 |
| Ex-slaves | 1 | 74 | 4 | 189 | 6 | 69 |

### 7.3.2.2. Verb type

Although this has not to our knowledge been specifically addressed in the literature, we wanted to ascertain whether there was any difference in marking rates between strong ("irregular") and weak ("regular") verbs. The Samaná data (but not the Ex-Slave Recordings) in Table 12 show a clear-cut tendency to retain *-s* on weak verbs, particularly in the third person. This is of course precisely the context where it would seem most crucial to disambiguate present-tense verbs from those with deleted past-tense clusters: weak verbs also showed most *-t,d* retention in these same materials (Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press).

**Table 12. Rates of verbal *-s* usage with strong vs. weak verbs**

| | Strong Verb | | Weak Verb | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3rd p. sg. deletion *-s* → -Ø** | %Ø | N | %Ø | N |
| Samaná | 52 | 361 | 37 | 271 |
| Ex-slaves | 32 | 31 | 33 | 15 |
| **non-3rd insertion -Ø → *-s*** | %[*-s*] | N | %[*-s*] | N |
| Samaná | 18 | 1296 | 23 | 664 |
| Ex-slaves | 4 | 176 | 3 | 150 |

## 7.4. Discourse factors

### 7.4.1. The sequence constraint

The operation of a "sequence" constraint on the occurrence of verbal *-s* has been attested by several researchers. This is the tendency for *-s* to occur only on the first conjunct of a conjoined pair or series of verbs (Fasold 1972:129, Myhill and Harris 1986:28). Butters (in press:7) also finds a tendency towards loss of the second *-s* on a conjunct in both Belizean English and Black English in Wilmington, S.C. The explanation for this type of sequencing is based on the assumption that *-s* use derives from an imported Standard English rule while -Ø reflects the use of the "proper Black English rule". Fasold (1972:130) notes that "while several speakers reverted to the Black English rule after having begun with the Standard English rule, ... none moved to the Standard English rule after having begun with Black English grammar". Table 13 summarizes the distribution of *-s* in conjoined verb phrases in the Samaná data base.

**Table 13. Distribution of *-s* in conjoined verb phrases (with same or deleted subject)**

| Sequence | % | Sequence | % | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *-s* + -Ø | 35.3 | *-s* + *-s* | 64.7 | 34 |
| -Ø + -Ø | 91.8 | -Ø + *-s* | 8.2 | 86 |

Samaná English shows no propensity for the type of sequencing cited for VBE. In fact, the occurrence of *-s* on the first conjunct (regardless of whether it is concord or non-concord) promotes, rather than inhibits, the occurrence of *-s* on the second. On the other hand, once a zero is used, again regardless of person and number, another zero is most likely. A similar "local concord" effect was noted by Poplack (1981) for plural *-s* marking in Puerto Rican Spanish.

### 7.4.2. "Narrative" *-s*

As mentioned above, Myhill and Harris (1986) have found verbal *-s* to be concentrated almost exclusively in narrative clauses in contemporary VBE, regardless of person and number of the subject. Of course, the use of present-tense forms in narrative discourse (the "Historical Present") has been widely attested (Wolfson 1979, Schiffrin 1981, Silva-Corvalán 1983, Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press), but as Labov (1987:8) points out, this innovative use of *-s* should not be confused with it (cf. Butters, in press). VBE *-s* is *not* used for general present reference, but rather, is almost entirely confined to the past. Thus verbal *-s* usage has become specialized for the narrative past function.

Use of *-s* in this context was also noted by Roberts (1976), who observed that "the function of hyper-*s* is a feature of narrative style in almost all data on Black English. It seems to have been more common before than it is now for if one examines the ex-slave narratives in Botkin's [1945] *Lay My Burden Down* it is seen to be almost universal" (p. 8). Though he concedes that the tales in the collection were not transcribed from recorded speech, he finds it "inconceivable" that interviewers could have conspired to "flavour" their transcriptions with hyper-*s* so consistently precisely for narrative style.

We now compare the distribution of *-s* in narrative and non-narrative clauses in Samaná English with that reported by Myhill and Harris[36]. Adopting the stricter definition of narrative provided in Labov and Waletzky (1967) rather than the looser characterization of events which may be construed to have taken place at some point in the past (cf. Roberts 1976, Butters, in press), we replicate Myhill and Harris' (1986) analysis on a data base of narratives of personal experience recounted by the Samaná informants (Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press). Table 14 shows no sign of association of *-s* with narrative clauses in early Black English; on the contrary, the Samaná materials show exactly the opposite effect to that described by Myhill and Harris, with a tendency towards *-s absence* in such clauses.

**Table 14. Distribution of verbal -s by grammatical person in narrative and non-narrative clauses in Samaná English and VBE (from Myhill and Harris 1986)**

| | SINGULAR | | | | | | PLURAL | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | | he/she | | Full NP (sg.) | | we | | they | | Totals | |
| | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N | %[-*s*] | N |
| M & H (1986) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Narrative | 32 | 50 | 59 | 54 | 55 | 31 | 61 | 18 | — | 0 | 50 | 153 |
| Non-narrative | 1 | 458 | 7 | 241 | 9 | 96 | 2 | 45 | — | 0 | 4 | 840 |
| Samaná | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Narrative | 0.5 | 188 | 0.3 | 215 | 3 | 35 | 6 | 18 | 0 | 41 | 2 | 497 |
| Non-narrative | 16 | 669 | 50 | 418 | 57 | 203 | 21 | 180 | 30 | 721 | 27 | 2633[37] |

This appears most dramatically when compared with inflection rates for the same grammatical persons in non-narrative discourse. In persons other than third, -Ø inflection is, of course, consistent with a present-tense interpretation (Historical Present), and in fact, independent distributional analyses provided clear evidence of the existence in Samaná English of a historical or narrative present tense (Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press), identical both in form and in function to its Standard English counterpart. The low rates of concord with 3rd p. sg. verbs in narrative clauses shown in Table 14 are likely due to the preponderance in this context, of *verba dicendi* (*say, tell*), which are particularly resistant to inflection (see also Schneider 1983). As mentioned earlier, these were excluded from the other calculations reported here[38].

### 7.4.3. Summary of individual effects

In sum, the factor-by-factor analyses presented above suggest that a number of factors condition the occurrence of verbal *-s*, only some of which have been attested previously, while other reported effects appear not to be operative at all in early Black English. First, contrary to any previous reports, we observe a small but consistent phonological condition on *-s* variability, manifested as a tendency toward preservation when *-s* is bisegmental and when it appears in non-consonantal environments. This effect has been widely attested in other studies of consonant deletion and cluster simplification, and appears to be operative in both concord and nonconcord contexts.

As far as the contribution of type of subject noun phrase is concerned, we observe on the one hand a tendency towards verbal inflection with heavy noun phrase (as opposed to pronominal) subjects, and on the other a tendency towards -Ø marking when the latter are indefinite. Both effects, attested in nonstandard white dialects and throughout the history of English, although never to our knowledge in VBE, are most robust in nonconcord contexts. Features of the verb also play a role. In contrast with earlier suggestions, we observe a tendency towards inflection in weak verbs denoting habitual (and not durative) aspect, which is strongest in 3rd p. sg. contexts. Finally, the two discourse factors reported to be operative in VBE — the sequence constraint and the association of *-s* with the narrative present — also have strong effects on *-s* usage in early Black English, but in the direction *opposite* to previous reports.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of these results is the finding that *both* 3rd. p. sg. and nonconcord *-s* are subject to regular, parallel environmental conditioning, although certain effects seems to be stronger in one or the other of the contexts. Now, while tabulations of effects taken one at a time, such as those reported above, are informative, they do not reveal the *relative* importance of factor effects to each other, nor whether all are in fact significant when considered simultaneously. We thus reanalyze the data using the logistic regression procedures implemented in the variable rule program (Sankoff 1988) to estimate the true effects of phonological and syntactic factors on both concord and nonconcord *-s* usage, and to remove artifacts of poor data distribution, correlated factors, or statistical fluctuations. This will enable us to determine which environmental factors have a significant effect on *-s* insertion and deletion when all are considered together, as well as to estimate the magnitude of individual factor effects.

### 7.5. Multivariate analysis of the contribution of factors to verbal *-s* usage

Table 15 displays the results of a variable rule analysis of the factors contributing to the probability that verbal *-s* will be present in the Samaná data base[39]. Higher numbers can be interpreted as favouring *-s* inflection, while lower ones disfavour it. The higher the figure, the greater the contribution of that factor to *-s* marking. The factors are displayed with the most significant ones first, as determined by the regression procedure.

**Table 15. Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of verbal *-s* in all grammatical persons (-Ø → -s) in Samaná English**

Corrected mean: .30

| **Person/Number** | |
|---|---|
| 3rd p.sg. | .77 |
| 3rd p. pl. | .54 |
| 1st p. sg. | .39 |
| 2nd p. sg. | .25 |

| **Verbal Aspect** | |
|---|---|
| Habitual/Iterative | .66 |
| Durative/Continuous | .44 |
| Punctual/Instantaneous | .42 |

| **Definiteness of Subject** | |
|---|---|
| Definite | .54 |
| Nondefinite | .41 |

| **Type of Subject** | |
|---|---|
| Noun phrase + relative | .77 |
| Noun phrase | .54 |
| Pronoun | .49 |

| **Underlying Phonetic Form** | |
|---|---|
| [əz] | .74 |
| [s] | .51 |
| [z] | .47 |

| **Preceding Phonological Segment** | |
|---|---|
| Vowel | .62 |
| Consonant | .48 |

| **Following Phonological Segment** | |
|---|---|
| Vowel | .55 |
| Pause | .53 |
| Consonant | .47 |

**Factors not selected:** none

The table shows that the greatest and most significant contribution to the presence of inflection is made by person and number of the subject: 3rd p. sg. subjects may be seen to favour *-s* marking more than any other factor examined, with a probability of .77. Third person plural subjects also show some tendency to favour marking. The fact that a preference (albeit weak) for nonconcordial marking persists in 3rd p. pl. as compared to other person numbers, is not surprising in view of the fact that historically, marking in this context is older, antedating concord in 3rd p. sg. (e.g. Curme 1977 and section (4.0) above). Verbal aspect is another important factor: inflection is favoured (at .66) only when the aspectual reading is habitual/iterative. Definite subjects, particularly when comprised of heavy NPs, also contribute to the probability of marking; the effect observed in Table 9 with regard to full vs. pronominal subjects appears quite reduced in this analysis (.54 vs. .49 respectively). Finally, the phonological effects cited above, though less significant than those of the other factors, persist.

We observed in section (7.4.3) above that although the ranking of factor effects was generally parallel in concord and nonconcord contexts, certain factors assumed particular importance in specific grammatical persons. Amalgamating the data for all persons, as in the analysis depicted in Table 15, could have the result of averaging out the effect of a factor with, say, a heavy contribution in concord contexts and only a slight one elsewhere. We thus reanalyse the data according to whether or not they occurred in 3rd p. sg. contexts, adopting the methodology detailed in section (6.2) above.

Table 16 displays the factor weights associated with verbal *-s* presence in persons other than 3rd p. sg.

**Table 16. Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of verbal *-s* in other than 3rd p. sg. contexts (-Ø → *-s*) in Samaná English.**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Corrected mean: | .22 | | |
| **Verbal Aspect** | | **Definiteness of Subject** | |
| Habitual/Iterative | .68 | Definite | .56 |
| Durative/Continuous | .44 | Indefinite | .39 |
| Punctual/Instantaneous | .39 | | |
| **Type of Subject** | | **Preceding Phonological Segment** | |
| Noun phrase + relative | .91 | Vowel | .62 |
| Noun phrase | .67 | Consonant | .48 |
| Pronoun | .48 | | |
| **Underlying Phonetic Form** | | **Following Phonological Segment** | |
| [əz] | .67 | Pause | .60 |
| [s] | .53 | Vowel | .55 |
| [z] | .46 | Consonant | .47 |

**Factors not selected: none**

The factor effects are essentially identical, although we observe the factor of type of subject to assume additional importance, with a clear difference between pronominal and full noun phrases, in the expected direction. The contribution of underlying phonetic form, on the other hand, is somewhat reduced. In Table 17, we compare the probabilities with which these same factors influence the deletion of 3rd p. sg. *-s*.

**Table 17. Contribution of factors selected as significant to the deletion of 3rd p. sg. *-s* (*-s* → -Ø) in Samaná English.**

Corrected mean: .43

| **Verbal Aspect** | | ***Definiteness of Subject** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Habitual/Iterative | .33 | Definite | .49 |
| Durative/Continuous | .56 | Indefinite | .54 |
| Punctual/Instantaneous | .57 | | |
| ***Type of Subject** | | ***Preceding Phonological Segment** | |
| Noun phrase + relative | .32 | Vowel | .43 |
| Noun phrase | .51 | Consonant | .51 |
| Pronoun | .52 | | |
| **Underlying Phonetic Form** | | ***Following Phonological Segment** | |
| [əz] | .08 | Pause | .57 |
| [s] | .56 | Vowel | .45 |
| [z] | .51 | Consonant | .53 |

*Factors not selected by the multiple regression procedure.

The table shows that two of the factors found to affect the presence of nonconcord *-s* (verbal aspect and underlying phonetic form) contribute a significant effect to the probability that 3rd p. sg. will be marked as well. That some of the other factors were not retained by the stepwise regression analysis is clearly due to the relatively small sample of 3rd p. sg. tokens — only 604 vs. 1881 for the conconcord contexts. Thus the table displays an analysis where all factors are forced into the regression[40].

It is remarkable that the constraint ranking, or the order in which the factors constituting each group affect the process under consideration, is basically identical for the two analyses, i.e. for all grammatical persons[41]. The result that both "insertion" and "deletion" are conditioned by the same factors indicates that verbal *-s* marking is a unitary process, involving both concord and nonconcord contexts. We do note, however, that the magnitude of some of the effects (e.g. preceding phonological segment, definiteness of the subject, type of subject) is sharply reduced in 3rd p. sg., and the lack of statistical significance may also be partly due to the weaker differential conditioning of constrasting features.

## 8.0 Discussion

How can these results be explained? We have described in some detail why the scientific record with regard to the factors conditioning verbal *-s* variability in English — whether early or modern, Black or

White, British or American — does not permit an easy solution based on either historical or comparative grounds. However, the findings we have presented do allow the following plausible hypothesis.

In section (4.0) we detailed the pervasive variability of *-s* throughout the verbal paradigm, which persisted in English at least until the early 17th century. Since an affix which occurred variably on all grammatical persons was unlikely to have functioned (only, if at all) as an agreement marker, it is most probable that other linguistic factors (in addition to social and stylistic factors) conditioned its occurrence. The exact nature of such factors can no longer be unambiguously reconstructed, although the two that were mentioned in the historical texts have been shown to maintain an effect in early Black English. It would not be unreasonable to assume that those factors approximated the ones depicted in Tables 16 and 17 — at least before the resolution of *-s* variability into a 3rd p. sg. agreement marker; the person/number constraint displayed in Table 15 would have been incorporated thereafter. More specifically, the verbal inflection system brought by the British settlers to the Southern United States would have embodied the constraints on *-s* variability depicted in Tables 16 and 17, or alternatively, Table 15, depending on the time the tendency toward 3rd p. sg. *-s* agreement.began to make inroads into the spoken language of the populace. Extrapolating from Schneider's (1983) suggestion, we hypothesize that the early slaves would have acquired this variable system, along with the constraints on its variability. This would be consistent with the major findings of this study, i.e. that 1) the expression of *nonconcord -s* is a result of regular variable conditioning, 2) the factors conditioning its occurrence are identical to those conditioning the occurrence of 3rd p. sg. *-s*, and 3) the grammaticalization of *-s* as the contemporary Standard English agreement marker (as expressed by the heavy contribution of the factor of 3rd p. sg. in Table 15) subsequently overrides quantitatively many of those conditioning effects in 3rd p. sg. contexts.

We have seen from Table 17 that there are only two strong constraints on 3rd p. sg. *-s* usage: a phonological one inhibiting deletion when *-s* is a bisegmental morpheme, and an aspectual one inhibiting deletion when the aspectual reading of the verb is habitual. The latter result, which has appeared consistently across the analyses presented here, inevitably raises the question of whether *-s* can be interpreted as an aspectual marker, thereby implying that it would be fulfilling a function which is somehow alien to English grammar. *-S* clearly does mark habitual aspect (more than durative and punctual aspects), but this function is not in contradiction with that of the present tense in Standard English or more generally. Comrie (1985:37) observes that the most characteristic use of the present tense is to refer to situations which occupy a longer period of time than the present moment, but which include the present moment within them, i.e. situations which can be construed as "habitual"). He defines the situation referred to by a

Comrie (1985:37) observes that the most characteristic use of the present tense is to refer to situations which occupy a longer period of time than the present moment, but which include the present moment within them, i.e. situations which can be construed as "habitual"). He defines the situation referred to by a

verb in the present tense as simply one which literally holds at the moment of speaking (ibid.:38). Whether or not this situation is part of a larger one extending into past or future time is an implicature which must be worked out on the basis of other features of the real world and of the sentence. Of these, Comrie characterizes sentential aspect as one of the most important in deciding whether the situation is restricted to the present moment (punctual). We have already noted the fact that in many languages, including English, habitual aspectual meaning is in some sense *embodied* in the present tense. Comrie illustrates the special position of habitual meaning in tense-aspect-mood systems by observing that it is situated at the intersection of the three: it can be expected to be expressed by means of a tense, since it involves location of a situation across an extended segment of time, it can be aspectual since it refers to the internal temporal contour of a situation; but it can also be modal since it involves generalizations about possible worlds from observation of the actual world (ibid.:40). Indeed, since there apparently exists no separate habitual tense apart from the present, he observes that the grammatical expression of habituality will always be integrated into the aspectual or modal system rather than into the tense system. Thus, as we we remarked in section (3.0) above, there is no straightforward way of *distinguishing* a tense function from an aspectual function of *-s*, since the two are inextricably linked.

We are now in a position to return to the original question raised in this paper: that of the origin and function of verbal *-s* in early Black English. We begin by reviewing the available evidence for the status of *-s* as an intrusion vs. an integral part of early Black English grammar. Recall that the arguments marshalled in favour of the status of *-s* as a hypercorrect intrusion (in contemporary VBE) rest on three premises: 1) *-s* is frequently absent in concord contexts, 2) *-s* is frequently inserted in other persons, as well as in non-finite forms, and 3) *-s* absence is not subject to regular phonological conditioning. We address each of these in turn.

First, we have shown that while 3rd p. sg. subject-verb agreement is far from categorical in either data set on early Black English, it is present in this environment at least half (in the Ex-Slave Recordings, more than 2/3) of the time. More important, arguments against standard English origins based on variable inflection rates cannot be considered fully convincing when we take into account that the frequencies (of non-standard deletion *and* non-standard insertion) are in fact lower than those attested for the few local British (Trudgill 1974, Cheshire 1982) and American (Bailey p.c.) white dialects which have been systematically studied; no one has suggested that verbal *-s* is not an integral part of these white dialects.

Finally, our study demonstrated that at least at an earlier stage of Black English, *-s* variability showed regular phonological conditioning (also detectable in Fasold's 1972 Washington data), in the expected direction. This conditioning, although clearly apparent in all contexts in the individual factor analysis, was largely overridden in 3rd p. sg. by the strength of the standard concord rule.

This paper has also demonstrated that, contrary to what would be expected from hypercorrection, *nonconcord -s* presence is also subject to regular conditioning (over and above the phonological), identical to that obtaining for concord *-s*. Based on our finding that two of the constraints reported throughout the history of English are operative in early Black English, we suggested that this pattern might be a synchronic reflex of the constraint ranking in the varieties of English which provided the linguistic model for the slaves. Given the difficulty of reconstructing the conditioning of a variable process which has now basically gone to completion, this suggestion remains speculative.

But whether or not the scenario we have outlined actually accounts for the facts of earlier White English does not weaken our finding that verbal *-s* marking within the early Black English systems we have examined is not random hypercorrection. The behaviour we have described represents a stage of the language in which a concord function for *-s* has already made a certain amount of progress in supplanting whatever earlier functions it might have had. We thus conclude that verbal *-s*, as well as the present tense, formed an integral part of the early Black English grammar. Further support in favour of this conclusion may be adduced from the behaviour of the individuals we have studied. We have already had occasion to observe the surprising degree of inter-speaker consistency (where the data permit comparison) on the ranking of constraints. Fasold (1972:146) had hypothesized that if *-s* insertion in nonconcord contexts and 3rd p. sg. *-s* absence were to be taken together as evidence for the absence of *-s* from the underlying grammar, then it ought to be the case that individuals who show most "hypercorrection" should be precisely those with least 3rd p. sg. *-s* presence. Table 18 shows no such relationship between the tendency toward lack of concord in 3rd p. sg. and *-s* insertion elsewhere among our Samaná informants. On the contrary, we observe a highly significant ($p < .001$) correlation (coefficient = .667) between concord and nonconcord contexts, such that speakers with high rates of *-s* marking in one show parallel rates in the other, and conversely. Our speaker sample is thus constituted of two types of individual: those who tend to mark *-s* and those who do not, regardless of grammatical person.

**Table 18.** Rates of concord *-s* absence vs. nonconcord *-s* presence by individual (Samaná speakers)[42]

| Speaker # | concord *-s* absence | | *-s* presence in nonconcord contexts | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Ø | N | % [*-s*] | N |
| 07 | 87 | 55 | 11 | 198 |
| 21 | 78 | 9 | 10 | 44 |
| 11 | 71 | 21 | 8 | 89 |
| 05 | 67 | 42 | 18 | 73 |
| 01 | 64 | 22 | 18 | 107 |
| 10 | 55 | 22 | 20 | 66 |
| 08 | 53 | 17 | 39 | 36 |
| 04 | 53 | 30 | 0 | 23 |
| 14 | 44 | 27 | 23 | 100 |
| 03 | 38 | 92 | 14 | 231 |
| 18 | 33 | 42 | 30 | 126 |
| 19 | 31 | 39 | 34 | 161 |
| 17 | 28 | 25 | 17 | 48 |
| 02 | 26 | 58 | 21 | 222 |
| 09 | 22 | 27 | 33 | 51 |
| 06 | 25 | 32 | 27 | 108 |
| 15 | 18 | 11 | 48 | 23 |
| 16 | 17 | 29 | 44 | 108 |

Our suggestion that variability in *-s* marking was acquired as an inherent part of the language as a whole receives strongest support from an examination of the contribution of extra-linguistic factors to its occurrence. The only extra-linguistic factor found to exert a consistent effect on *-s* usage in Samaná is access to formal instruction (Table 19).

**Table 19. The Effect of Education on *-s* Usage**

| Some Formal Education | Concord *-s* presence |  | Nonconcord *-s* presence |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | % [*-s*] | N | % [*-s*] | N |
| Speaker # |  |  |  |  |
| 16* | 83 | 29 | 44 | 108 |
| 15 | 82 | 11 | 48 | 23 |
| 09* | 78 | 27 | 33 | 51 |
| 06* | 75 | 32 | 27 | 108 |
| 02 | 74 | 58 | 21 | 222 |
| 17 | 72 | 25 | 17 | 48 |
| 19* | 69 | 39 | 34 | 161 |
| 18* | 67 | 42 | 30 | 126 |
| 03* | 62 | 92 | 14 | 231 |
| 14 | 56 | 27 | 23 | 100 |
| Mean | **71.8** |  | Mean | **29.1** |

| No Formal Education | Concord *-s* presence |  | Nonconcord *-s* presence |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | % [*-s*] | N | % [*-s*] | N |
| Speaker # |  |  |  |  |
| 04 | 47 | 30 | 0 | 23 |
| 08 | 47 | 17 | 39 | 36 |
| 10 | 45 | 22 | 20 | 66 |
| 01 | 36 | 22 | 18 | 107 |
| 05 | 33 | 42 | 18 | 73 |
| 11* | 29 | 21 | 8 | 89 |
| 21 | 22 | 9 | 11 | 44 |
| 07 | 13 | 55 | 11 | 198 |
| Mean | **41.0** |  | Mean | **15.6** |

*Individuals connected with church activities

Contrary to expectation, individuals who have had any schooling at all, and who are closely connected with church activities, are precisely the ones with most verbal *-s* presence in *both* concord and nonconcord contexts! This suggests that *-s* usage was a prestige marker in the dialect at an earlier point in time, as would be expected if it were associated with the speech of the white masters (whatever its affect in their variety), and that its ulterior movement towards an indicator of nonstandard speech in non-concord contexts had not penetrated the language of the ancestors of the Samaná informants by the time they sailed for the Dominican Republic in 1824. Their subsequent lack of contact with other standardizing influences (Poplack and Sankoff 1987) explains the contemporary pattern.

In sum, the facts we have presented here concerning the linguistic and extralinguistic conditioning of verbal *-s* usage all militate in favour of the suggestion that present-tense marking via verbal *-s* was an integral part of the early Black English grammar. This process was variable, but not random, and may well have reflected synchronic variability in the input language at the time of acquisition. The reasons for its disappearance, if it has indeed disappeared from contemporary VBE, must remain an open question.

---

NOTES:

[*] We would like to thank Guy Bailey, whose cooperation with this project has far exceeded the call of duty, as well as Don Hindle, Bill Labov and David Sankoff, for reading and commenting on this work.

[1] The Samaná English data contained only seven instances of 2nd p. pl. in a present context, none of which occurred with *-s* , and the Ex-Slave Recordings, only one. Given the paucity of data in the Ex-Slave Recordings overall, there is not always an illustrative example for each context.

[2] The numbered codes in parentheses refer to the speaker and line number in the Samaná corpus. ESR designates the Ex-Slave Recordings and the initials identify the speaker.

[3] The two sole instances of [*-s*] in 1st p. pl. in the Ex-Slave Recordings occur in this direct quotation of JM's white masters.

[4] Note, however, that Labov refers only to adolescent and pre-adolescent speech here. With the exception of his southern-raised lower working class adults in casual style, the inflected verb form predominates among the adults he studied (Labov et al. 1968:161-2).

[5] Labov (1987:8) observes that *-s* is involved in "radical" style-shifting.

[6] *-S* variability in persons other than 3rd p. sg. is variously referred to in the literature as hyper-*s*, hyper-*z*, and nonconcord *-s*.

[7] Though Brewer cites 18th and 19th century British dialects as the source of nonconcord *-s*, she does not specifically address the issue of the origin of its use as a durative aspectual marker in early Black English.

[8] This possibility is at least implicitly endorsed by Bickerton (1975) and Roberts (1976) as well.

[9] Presumably on the basis of the earlier studies by Labov et al. (1968), Wolfram (1969) and Fasold (1972).

[10] This figure is for Schneider's amalgamated data.

[11] Such spurious comparisons can easily be discarded when detected. More puzzling is the discrepancy between the studies in marking rates of the 3rd p. sg. verbs, for which Brewer *did* calculate the proportion of *-s* out of all inflected and uninflected forms:

**% of *-s* marking on 3rd p. sg. verbs in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives (*-s*/*-s* + -Ø )**

| | South Carolina | Texas |
|---|---|---|
| Brewer 1986 | 7.0% | 43.8% |
| Schneider 1983 | 70.5% | 75.0% |

---

Whether the incongruity stems from the data base or other factors remains an open question. It was not addressed in the later paper.

[12] These were extracted from a corpus of casual conversations with white middle-class Canadians recorded by Tagliamonte in 1982.

[13] The only example containing both inflected and uninflected verbs provided by Roberts (1976:9) in support of his claim for a habitual function of *-s* shows exactly the same pattern: *both* the *-s* marked (in italics) and the -Ø marked (in bold face) verbs denote habitual/iterative aspect:

> Well, when I **cuss** Master Ed, I *goes* 'way down in the bottoms where the corn **grow** high ... I *looks* east and west ... I **see** no Master Ed. Then I *pitches* into him and *gives* him the worst cussing ... Then when I *goes* back my feeling is satisfied ..

[14] Perhaps this "tense-z" corresponds to what we and others have analyzed as historical present, and Myhill and Harris, as narrative present.

[15] Holmqvist (1922:2) suggests that it may simply be an analogical extension from 2nd p. sg. which ended in *-s* in Old English and other Germanic languages.

[16] The (s) has been added to the table by us to reflect Mossé's observation in a footnote to his table that "in the Northern dialect the *-s* ending is gradually extended to the 1st p. sg. of the present indicative" (p.79), see also Wright (1905:175-6), Curme (1977:53), Wakelin (1977:119).

[17] The reasons for this rather unusual development have not been treated in any work on the history of English which we have consulted: 3rd p. sg. is considered the most basic form, on which the morphology of the other person forms of a tense is modelled (e.g. Bybee and Brewer 1980). Manczak (1963:36) has suggested that the persistence of *-s* on 3rd p. sg. can be accounted for by his "hypotheses XIII and XIV": that the roots and endings of the third person and of the singular undergo fewer analogical changes than those of other persons and numbers.

[18] Trudgill (1974) only provides data on the social and stylistic conditioning of *-s* occurrence.

[19] For the relationship of Samaná English to early American Black English, see Poplack and Sankoff 1983, 1987; Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press. These references also provide details of sample selection and corpus constitution.

[20] The analyses we report of the Ex-Slave Recordings are based on data extracted from high-quality, reel-to-reel copies of the original Library of Congress tapes, kindly made available to us by Guy Bailey, and not from the transcripts or the cassettes.

[21] The majority of the Ex-Slave informants (8/11) had 25 potential contexts for verbal *-s* or less per person.

[22] With the exception of 2nd p. pl., for which there were sparse data in both corpora; see fn. 2 above. This context was excluded from further analysis.

[23] An obvious exception is that of present-tense verbs in complicating action clauses of narratives, which, by virtue of their occurrence in these contexts, have past temporal reference. Because expression of historical present falls within the standard uses of the English present tense, such forms were necessarily retained in our data base. It is only when these verbs are regular (weak) that an unavoidable ambiguity arises as to whether their uninflected form results from deletion of present- or past-tense inflections (For more detailed treatment of this problem, see Tagliamonte and Poplack, in press: 5-6). In this study, however, verbs in narrative clauses only represent approximately 15% of the data (Table 14), and of these, less than a quarter fall into the regular category (ibid: Table 1). We thus estimate the

number of verbs in the data set which are truly ambiguous as to past- or present-tense inflection to be under 4%. Compare Myhill and Harris (1986:29), who include regular past-tense verbs in the variable environment for *-s*. Additional motivation for excluding past-reference contexts from analysis comes from the fact that *-s* inflection here was virtually non-existent in our data (v. also section (7.4.2), especially Table 14).

[24] Only 20 examples of "invariant" *be* occurred in the Samaná corpus, half of which were inflected with *-s*. Instances of inflection on other non-finite verbs were very infrequent (N=10) in these data, and, with one exception, non-existent in the Ex-Slave Recordings. Finite forms of *be* were also excluded from our study, both because of its suppletive present-tense forms which may have been acquired independently, and because widespread deletion of the copula by an independent process (Poplack and Sankoff 1987) makes concord impossible to determine in many cases. Finite forms of *have* were also excluded, following Fasold (1972).

[25] This is in contrast to Labov et al. 1968:166 who found that the verb *got* in Nonstandard Negro English showed a high concentration of "hyper-s" in 3rd p. sg. as well as other persons.

[26] Productive uses of these verbs were retained in the analysis, e.g. *But that I tells people sometime* (03/1258).

[27] Indeed, given the fact that only two variants are treated, figures for the alternate analysis may be obtained simply by subtracting the ones provided from 1.

[28] Parentheses indicate sparse data.

[29] In Washington only 13% of the time.

[30] The extremely low rate of verbal *-s* usage in the Ex-Slave Recordings (42 cases in all) is not a reflection of generalized absence of this consonant in the data. Though we have not yet examined this systematically, *-s* is apparently used freely in plurals. In view of the distribution in Table 6, we are unsure of how to interpret Holm's (to appear) remark that "the use of the uninflected verb for the present tense ... predominates in the language of each speaker" in the corpus, unless he is referring to persons other than third, since we have seen that 3rd p. sg. verbs are in fact *inflected* 71% of the time. If this is the case, can lack of inflection in non-3rd p. sg. contexts – the norm in most contemporary dialects of English – be appropriately characterized as an apparent remnant of an earlier English-based creole (ibid.)?

[31] Of course *-s* is also most likely to occur with 3rd p. sg. in Detroit and Washington, but at substantially lower rates. It is nonetheless the case that Wolfram (1969:133) reports up to 43% 3rd p. sg. *-s* in Upper Working Class speech. It is also of interest that the rate of retention of 3rd p. sg. *-s* in Samaná exactly parallels that found by Bailey in contemporary Southern white folk speech: 57% (Bailey p.c.).

[32] Occurrences of this context in the Ex-Slave Narratives are too rare to permit analysis.

[33] Of the eight contrasts between vocalic and consonantal effects in Table 8, there are enough data and enough of a difference so that one is significant at the 0.01 level and three more are significant at the 0.1 level (using a $\chi^2$ test with continuity correction).

[34] The phonological effect found in the Washington phonological sequence data is actually quite strong: as in Samaná, an intervocalic environment clearly promotes retention of *-s*.

**3rd p. sg. -s absence by surrounding phonological sequence**

| | V_#V | V_#C | C_#V | C_#C |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Ø | % Ø | % Ø | % Ø |
| Detroit | 61.8 | 72.2 | 67.4 | 62.4 |
| Washington | 50.8 | 72.9 | 64.2 | 65.5 |
| Samaná | 31.4 | 36.0 | 41.6 | 48.1 |

Given these findings, it is unclear why Fasold was so categorical in rejecting the possibility that verbal *-s* could be phonologically conditioned.

[35] Although not reported, a (slight) preference for inflecting verbs with full noun phrase subjects is also observable in Myhill and Harris' (1986) VBE data: 14.9% vs. 9.6% marking for pronominal subjects (abstracted from Table 2, p. 27).

[36] The Ex-Slave Recordings contain no structured narratives to speak of, and could not be analyzed in this way.

[37] These figures are taken from a gross data tabulation of all potential present-tense examples from the entire body of narrative and non-narrative discourse. In subsequent analyses many of these contexts were eliminated in accordance with the criteria outlined in section (6.1).

[38] There is ample evidence to support the unique behaviour of *verba dicendi* in narrative style in general. Johnstone (1985:18) suggests that in stories these function as "semantically neutral place markers, indicating only that what follows is supposed to be taken as someone's exact words". Vincent (1983) showed that in Montreal French narratives, *il dit, je dis*, etc. function as discourse particles, replacing others like *tu sais, n'est-ce pas*, which occur in non-narrative contexts. In the Samaná narratives, 3rd p. sg. *sayØ* is nearly categorical.

[39] The data contained in the Ex-Slave Recordings are too sparse to permit multivariate analysis.

[40] The two significant factor groups show essentially the same values with or without the presence of the other factor groups. Two others, following phonological environment and type of subject, were almost significant at the .05 level.

[41] Recall that Tables 16 and 17 depict analyses with different underlying forms, so that a factor with a heavy contribution to "insertion" will show up as contributing a small one to "deletion".

[42] Only 18 of the 21 speakers are considered here because the remainder had sparse data.

## References

Bailey, G., Maynor, N. and Cukor-Avila, P. To appear. Introduction. The Emergence of Black English: Texts and commentary. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Barber, C. 1976. Early Modern English. London: Deutsch.

Baugh, J. 1980. "A Reexamination of the Black English Copula". Locating Language in Time and Space ed. by W. Labov, 83-195. New York: Academic Press.

Baugh, J. 1986. "Linguistic Divergence or Linguistic Innovation: A review of suffix /-s/ in Vernacular Black English". Paper presented at the American Dialect Society Meeting, December 1986.

Bickerton, D. 1975. Dynamics of a Creole System. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brewer, J. 1986. "Durative Marker or Hypercorrection? The case of -s in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives". Language Variety in the South: Perspectives in black and white, ed. by Michael Montgomery and Guy Bailey, 131-148.Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Brunner, K. 1963. An Outline of Middle English Grammar. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Butters, R. 1973. "Black English {-Z} — Some theoretical implications". American Speech 48: 37-45.

Butters, R. 1986. "Linguistic Convergence in a North Carolina Community". Paper presented at NWAVE-XV.

Butters, R. in press. "Verbal -s as Past-Time Indication in Various Narratives". To appear in the Proceedings of the Spring Colloquium of the Linguistics Circle of the University of North Carolina.

Bybee, J. and Brewer, M. 1986. "Explanation in Morphophonemics: Changes in Provençal and Spanish preterite forms". Lingua 52:201-242.

Comrie, B. 1985. Tense. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Comrie, B. 1976. Aspect. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cheshire, J. 1977. Variation in an English dialect: A sociolinguistic study. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Curme, G. 1977. A Grammar of the English Language. Essex, Connecticut: Verbatim.

Fasold, R. 1971. "Minding Your Z's and D's: Distinguishing syntactic and phonological variable rules". Papers from the Seventh Regional Meeting, Chicago Linguistic Society, 360-67. Chicago: Department of Linguistics. University of Chicago.

Fasold, R. 1972. Tense Marking in Black English: A linguistic and social analysis. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Feagin, C. 1979. Variation and Change in Alabama English: A sociolinguistic study of the white community. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Federal Writer's Project. 1941. Slave Narratives. A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from interviews with Former Slaves. Washington, D.C..

Guy, G. 1980. "Variation in the Group and the Individual: The case of final stop deletion". Locating Language in Time and Space, ed. by W. Labov. 1-35. New York: Academic Press.

Hackenberg, R. G. 1972. Appalachian English: A sociolinguistic study. Georgetown University, Ph.D. dissertation.

Holm, J. To appear. "The Atlantic Creoles and the Language of the Ex-Slave Narratives". The Emergence of Black English: Texts and commentary. ed. by G. Bailey et al. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Holmqvist, E. 1922. On the History of the English Present Inflections Particularly -th and -s. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.

Hughes, A. and Trudgill, P. 1979. English Accents and Dialects. London: Edward Arnold Publishers, Ltd.

Jeremiah, M A. 1977. The Linguistic Relatedness of Black English and Antiguan Creole: Evidence from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Brown University, Ph.D. dissertation.

Jespersen, O. H. 1909/49. A Modern English Grammar. Part VI Morphology. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.

Johnstone, B. 1985. "He says ... so I said": Past/present tense alternation in narrative depictions of authority. Paper presented at NWAVE XIV.

Kennedy, A. G. 1970. Current English. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

Labov, W. 1969. "Contraction, Deletion, and Inherent Variability of the English Copula". Language 45:715-62.

Labov, W. 1972. Language in the Inner City. Studies in the Black English Vernacular. Oxford: Blackwell.

Labov, W. 1982. "Objectivity and Commitment in Linguistic Science: The case of the Black English trial in Ann Arbor". Language in Society 11. 165-201.

Labov, W. 1985. "The Increasing Divergence of Black and White Vernaculars: Introduction to research reports". Unpublished ms.

Labov, W. 1987. "Are Black and White Vernaculars Diverging?" American Speech 62.1:5-12.

Labov, W., Cohen, P., Robins, C., and Lewis, J. 1968. A Study of the Non-Standard English of Negro and Puerto Rican Speakers in New York City. 2 vols. Philadelphia: U.S. Regional Survey.

Labov, W. and Waletzky, J. 1967. "Narrative Analysis: Oral versions of personal experience". Essays on the Verbal and Visual arts. ed. by J. Helm, 12-44. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Manczak, W. 1963. "Tendances générales du développement morphologique". Lingua 12:19-38.

McDavid, R. I. Jr. 1969. "Dialects: British and American Standard and Nonstandard". Linguistics Today ed. by Archibald A. Hill, 79-88. New York: Basic Books.

McDavid R. I. Jr. 1977. "Evidence". Papers in Language Variation: SAMLA-ADS Collection ed. by David L. Shores and Carole P. Hines, 125-32. University of Alabama Press.

McDavid, R. I. Jr. and L. M. Davis. 1972. "The Dialects of Negro Americans". Studies in Linguistics in Honor of George L. Trager ed. by M. Estellie Smith, 303-12. The Hague: Mouton.

Mossé, F. 1952. A Handbook of Middle English. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press.

Myhill, J. and Harris, W.A. 1986. "The Use of the Verbal *-s* Inflection in BEV". Diversity and Diachrony ed. by D. Sankoff, 25-32. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Pfaff, C. 1971."Historical and Structural Aspects of Sociolinguistic Variation: The copula in Black English". Inglewood, California: Southwest Regional Laboratory Technical Report 37.

Pitts, W. 1981. "Beyond Hypercorrection: The use of emphatic -z in BEV". Chicago Linguistic Society 17:303-310.

Pitts, W. 1986. "Contrastive Use of Verbal -z in Slave Narratives". Diversity and Diachrony ed. by D. Sankoff, 73-82. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Poplack, S. 1979. Function and Process in a Variable Phonology. University of Pennsylvania, Ph.D. dissertation.

Poplack, S. 1981. "Mortal Phonemes as Plural Morphemes". Variation Omnibus ed. by D. Sankoff and H. Cedergren, 59-71. Edmonton: Linguistic Research, Inc.

Poplack, S. and Sankoff, D. 1983/80. "Resultados del contacto inglés-español en Samaná". Boletín de la academia puertorriqueña de la lengua española VIII, 2: 103-121.

Poplack, S. and Sankoff, D. 1987. "The Philadelphia Story in the Spanish Caribbean". American Speech 63.1:291-314.

Roberts, P. A. 1976. "Hypercorrection as Systematic Variation". Paper presented at the Society for Caribbean Linguistics Conference.

Sankoff, D. 1988. GoldVarb. Macintosh application. Centre de recherche mathématiques, Université de Montréal.

Schiffrin, D. 1981. "Tense Variation in Narrative". Language 57.1: 45-62.

Silva-Corvalán, C. 1983. "Tense and Aspect in Oral Spanish Narrative: Context and meaning". Language 59.4: 761-780.

Schneider, E. 1983. "The Origin of the Verbal -s in Black English". American Speech 58.2:99-113.

Sommer, E. 1986. "Variation in Southern Urban English". Language Variety in the South: Perspectives in black and white, ed. by Michael Montgomery and Guy Bailey, 180-201.Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Strang, B. M. H. 1970. A History of English. London:Methuen & Co. Ltd.

Sweet, Henry. 1891. New English Grammar. Part I. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Tagliamonte, S. and Poplack, S. in press. "How Black English *PAST* got to the Present: Evidence from Samaná". To appear in Language in Society 17.4.1988.

Trudgill, P. 1974. The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Traugott, E. C. 1977. A History of English Syntax. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Vincent, D. 1983. Les ponctuants de la langue. Université de Montréal, Ph.D. dissertation.

Visser, F. Th. 1970. An Historical Syntax of the English Language. 3 parts. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Wakelin, M. F. 1977. English Dialects: An Introduction. London: Athlone Press.

Wardale, E. E. 1937. An Introduction to Middle English. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Wolfram, W. 1969. A Sociolinguistic Description of Detroit Negro Speech. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wolfram, W. 1974. "The Relationship of White Southern Speech to Vernacular Black English". Language 50: 498-527.

Wright, J.. 1905. The English Dialect Grammar. Oxford: Henry Frowde.

Wyld, H. C. 1927. A Short History of English. London: John Murray.

# GROUP AFFILIATION AND QUANTITATIVE SOCIOLINGUISTICS

M B H Rampton
(University of London Institute of Education)

## Abstract

This paper initially summarises five questions which now figure quite prominently in quantitative sociolinguistic discussions of speaker classification: (1) how far are speaker categories emic or etic? (2) do they encode local inter-speaker relationships? (3) can they combine with accounts of interactional language use and learning? (4) do they handle flexibility and multiplicity as features of group membership? and (5) are interactive and referential group affiliation analytically distinguished? It considers the ways in which quantitative research has handled some of these but not others, and suggests that (4) and (5) currently present the greatest empirical challenge.

A methodology capable of overcoming (4) and (5) is then outlined and illustrated with a case study which investigated the distribution of two phonological variables across one multi-ethnic adolescent peer group. Its relation to (1), (2) and (3) is closely examined, and it is suggested that in comparison with other empirical endeavours, this approach does significantly extend the methodological repertoire of quantitative sociolinguistics.

## 0. INTRODUCTION*

The first part of this paper reiterates some important issues in quantitative sociolinguistic discussion of speaker classification. In the next, it sketches a research case study which attempts to extend the methodological repertoire of quantitative sociolinguistics so that its empirical tools draw alongside its conceptual deliberations on this theme. Finally, an assessment of the case study is presented.

## 1.1 DISCUSSIONS ABOUT SPEAKER CLASSIFICATION IN QUANTITATIVE SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Speaker categorisation has been extensively debated by sociolinguists and discussion of the problems associated with group scoring and composite indices can probably be taken as read (see eg Milroy 1980, 1987a; Hudson 1980). However other issues have been raised which it is worth here attending to in more detail. The first of these concerns the status of the group

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 279-294
© the author

categories chosen as extralinguistic variables: are these etic observer classifications or do they represent categorisations operative within the communities being studied (Milroy 1980:40)? A second (and closely related) issue focuses on the degree to which the labels attached to speakers encode the empirical local ties in which they're actually embedded. The characterisation of speakers in terms of class, gender and ethnicity gives an indication of the speaker's social relatedness at only an abstract level, in terms of a general theory of society: speakers have a social life as coins (of different though predetermined value) in some currency system selected/invented by the analyst and their identity is likely to be relational only within an a priori framework (see Gal 1979:Ch 5; Bortoni-Ricardo 1985:70). This leads into a third question: how far do the social categories used give empirical leverage on interactional language use and acquisition (Gal 1979; Edwards 1986:127)? Analysis of speakers as isolated units lends itself to a primarily intra-mental and psycholinguistic approach to speech processing and this has given rise to severe and justified criticism of 'secular linguistic' accounts of verbal style (Gal 1979:8,9; Brown & Levinson 1979). Indeed, failure to handle the dyad as the minimal social unit of stylistic analysis has permitted (along with other factors) a view that interactional sociolinguistics and quantitative studies of speech distribution might be separate and incompatible fields (Gumperz 1982:26).

These three questions have coincided with important new emphases in empirical methodology (for example network analysis and participant observation within fairly small groups), but it is not so often that studies succeed on all three counts and below I shall try to show how weakness in one of these areas can undermine efforts in the others.

Before that however, it is necessary to refer to a fourth very prominent issue on the sociolinguistic agenda - this is LePage and Tabouret-Keller's concern with group belonging as a flexible, fluid and multi-form cognitive phenomenon. (1) In comparison with the other three issues, as yet this has received little empirical attention and certainly hasn't been satisfactorily resolved (McEntaggart & LePage 1982:123; LeP & T-K 1985:180; Milroy 1987b:115). Indeed failure to handle this issue contributes another strand to the case for the segregation of interactional from quantitative sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982). Instead, this has been most fully addressed within the social psychology of language by Giles and his associates (eg Johnson & Giles 1981).

## 1.2 Giles, Milroy and Two Notions of Group

So far then, we have pointed to four questions which are prominent in discussions of speaker classification:

(i) how far are the speaker categories emic or etic?
(ii) how far do they encode inter-speaker relationships

as these occur in particular socio-cultural contexts?

(iii) what scope do they give for combination with accounts of interactional language use and acquisition?

(iv) how far do they reckon with flexibility and multiplicity as features of category membership?

Their importance can be gauged when we look at the light that they throw on the canonical work of both Giles and Milroy.

Giles' work looks principally problematic by the first and second criteria. Speakers and collectivities are generally given only broad class/age/sex/ethnic/occupational designations, with the result that they can be said to possess recognised social histories only to the extent that such general classifications adequately describe the social experience of the people inside them. Without specified histories of social interaction, there is also no sense of the subculturally particular communicative practices which these generate (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz 1982), and group for Giles is important not for its cultural legacy but rather as a key cognitive unit in the 'on-line' processing of speech. Giles' notion of the sociolinguistic automaton may be an appropriate characterisation of Milroy's speakers: however as perhaps he himself might concede (Giles & Ryan 1982), his own speakers tend to be sociolinguistic and cultural non-entities.

Problems in Milroy's work (1980,1987b) can be traced back to the first and fourth questions. Firstly there is no detailed evidence of a correspondence between locally defined identities, roles and settings on the one hand, and on the other, the way that community life is segmented in order to construct indices of network involvement. As a result the network scores with which speakers are characterised can only be viewed as analytic, and this creates problems of theoretical interpretation. The most serious of these concerns norm-enforcement, the principle proposed as the main link between network and interactional language use. One instance of this is reported (1980:60-1) in which a Ballymacarrett youngster adopts a less vernacular phonological style and is rebuked by his friends for doing so. It may be that this group does indeed have a sense of collective identity but it can't be assumed that the identity being threatened is co-terminous with the residential proximity, kinship, gender, and occupational co-participations which are represented in the network indices. The network measure subsumes a host of different identities (1980:115) and it is possible that the incident in question hinges on a sense of group belonging largely alien or even opposed to most of the people in the neighbourhood (1980:61). The central point is that norm-enforcement exists in relation to the values which people adopt as they shift between the multiple identities available to them, and thus norm-enforcement is a complex socio-cognitive activity which requires much more delicate analysis if attempts are to be made to portray it empirically.

In fact in the process of identifying limitations in the work of Giles and Milroy, ways of combining their approaches start to emerge and these become clearer when we consider the rather different notions of group with which each is operating. Indeed these two separate notions of group are quite frequently remarked on in sociolinguistics.

In the first, 'group' is conceived in concrete terms of who interacts with whom, probably within a shared locality (Fishman's interaction networks and experiential group-membership (1972)). In the second sense, 'group' is viewed as a psychological construct and any given group acquires its definition from the relations of contrast and complementarity that it forms with others around it. Fishman describes this as referential group-membership and in contrast to the first notion, group membership in this conceptualisation must be an insider perception. In the interactive sense, the 'groupness' or unity of a set of people can be something merely attributed to them by the researcher, since people may interact frequently with little sense of felt collectivity.

Clearly Milroy's concern is with interactive group-membership, while Giles' focus is on the referential.

As far as I know, no quantitative studies have sustained this distinction empirically and this is a pity because it obviously has importance at both macro and micro sociolinguistic levels: returning for instance to Milroy's work, the insertion of a working notion of referential group alignment would provide empirical access to questions of language, solidarity and norm-enforcement, and it would also help to dispel a determinism implicit in the model as currently formulated (cf Romaine 1981:111-4; Bortoni-Ricardo 1985:82). More specifically, it would provide a way of expanding the account to accomodate the proverbial wisdom that 'familiarity breeds contempt'.

In short the momentum of this discussion is to add a fifth issue to the list of questions being asked about speaker-categorisation in quantitative sociolinguistics:

(v) how far is group-membership defined in terms of interactional association held analytically distinct from psycho-social category identification?

To this however a counter-question proposes itself: are the bounds of empirical practicability being exceeded here? My answer to this is no, and the next part of this paper describes a case study attempt to extend the methodological repertoire of quantitative sociolinguistics so that it can empirically cope not only with the dynamic and multiform aspects of group membership but also with the differing linguistic effects of group affiliation in its interactive and referential forms.

## 2.0 AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

The focus of this study was upon the use of two phonological variables by a group of 17 twelve to fourteen year old British boys of Afro-Caribbean (2), Anglo (3), Mixed (1), Indian (4) and Pakistani (7) descent, all living in one neighbourhood of a town in the South Midlands.

The first of the independent variables looked at the extent to which each youngster had multiplex network ties with kids from ethnic outgroups. The second independent variable concentrated on the extent to which individuals saw themselves as similar or different to the people and groups around them. The dependent linguistic variables were post-vocalic (l) in preconsonantal and word-final environments and word-initial voiced TH (for a full account of the research, see Rampton 1987).

### 2.1 Developing Measures of Group Affiliation as both Network Association and Psycho-Social Identification

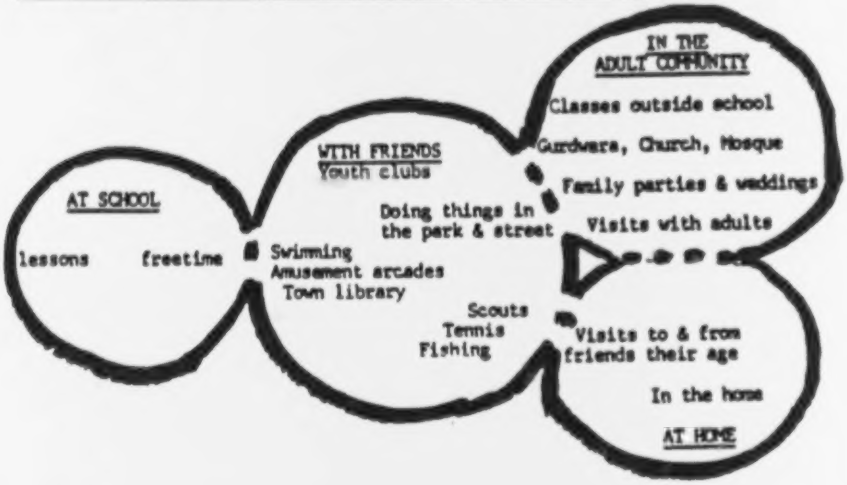
In view of the 5 questions above - and particularly the last - there were at least two design requirements for any network indices that I constructed:

(i) if some form of sociometric naming technique was used, it was important to ensure that reported friendships were actual rather than merely desired (otherwise the network measure would end up reflecting referential rather than interactive group affiliation);
(ii) if the empirical research was to feed into theoretical discussion of language-network relationships, any indices it used needed to be tied to reasonably coherent suggestions about their cognitive significance.

To handle the first, a number of steps were taken both during and after fieldwork. To cope with the second - to try to connect the network measure with some fairly specific hypotheses about its psychological relevance - initially an empirical model of sociolinguistic domains was constructed (see Diagram 1). After that, multiplex interactional relationships were defined as those which occurred in 3 or more domains. In practice, this meant that with cross-ethnic relationships in particular, the focus was on friends being admitted into their associate's intra-ethnic domains, so that in principle an extra dimension was being added to their knowledge and experience of each other, and maybe their apprehension of differing cultural systems was being extended to another realm. Finally, after this attempt to adumbrate the kind of understanding that multiplexity entailed here, % scores were used to show how far each informant had multiplex ties with kids of Pakistani, Anglo, Afro-Caribbean and Indian parentage.

To find out how the knowledge and experience implied in these network indices might have shaped an informant's loyalties, aspirations and sense of their own group-belonging, it was then necessary to move from the interactive to the referential notion of group.

DIAGRAM 1 : FOUR DOMAINS FOR BOYS OF SOUTH ASIAN PARENTAGE, WITH THE SETTINGS AND ACTIVITIES WHICH GO WITH EACH


AT SCHOOL
lessons
freetime
WITH FRIENDS
Youth clubs
Swimming
Amusement arcades
Town library
Doing things in the park & street
Scouts
Tennis
Fishing
IN THE ADULT COMMUNITY
Classes outside school
Gurdwara, Church, Mosque
Family parties & weddings
Visits with adults
Visits to & from friends their age
In the home
AT HOME

To do this, I used Identity Structure Analysis (ISA), an elicitation procedure developed by the social psychologist Peter Weinreich (cf Weinreich 1980). This gives an idea of how far individuals see themselves as similar to or different from the people and groups around them, and in general its quite sophisticated conceptual idiom looks remarkably close to LePage and Tabouret-Keller's (eg 1985; cf Rampton 1986, 1987).

As an empirical procedure, ISA in this research involved two semi-structured interviews focussing on each informant's personal and local social lives. From these, a list was made up of the evaluative dimensions (='constructs') that had seemed important to each informant, and these were then used in a pencil and paper procedure in which they rated the people and groups known to them. After this, data were fed into a computer programme which produced a wide range of complex indices. I concentrated on the very simplest of these, only one of which requires definition here:

> 'Current identification
> The extent of a person's current identification with another is defined as the degree of similarity between the qualities he attributes to the other, whether "good" or "bad", and those of his current self-image.' (1980:13)

It was also decided to look at each informant's identification with only 6 (out of at least 20) reference groups: 'English kids','Indian kids','Pakistani kids','West Indian kids','co-ethnic adults'and 'teachers'.

Before moving on, it is worth summarising how these two variables stand in relation to one another and to some of our initial questions.

As explored here, referential and interactive group-membership exist in a relation of part to whole. The role of ISA vis-a-vis network analysis is not to measure attitudes versus behaviour, but to try to make explicit one or two of the numerous psycho-social relationships which network analysis encompasses without specifying.

In line with this, we can clarify how each approach relates to language. Given its relatively approximative and socio-cognitively non-specific nature, the value of network analysis must be framed in terms of the rough indication it gives of the range of linguistic items a person is exposed to, and what they're likely to learn and habitually deploy (Afendras 1979:662; LePage's riders (b) & (d) 1980:123-4; Gal 1979:131-2). Links between language and referential group membership can be proposed in more specific terms : identification with a category is likely to influence psychological susceptibility to particular speech models, and interactionally it can be held to affect specific types of linguistic self projection (Gal 1979:15-6; LeP & T-K 1985; Johnson & Giles 1981; Thakerar, Giles & Cheshire 1982).

Both conceptions of group affiliation are then theoretically compatible with models of interactional language use, but that doesn't mean that the indices here are capable of empirically exploring what the connections between group affiliation and interactional language use might actually be (cf Berreman 1972). This study leaves out situation and discourse as analytic levels, and indeed since interaction is likely to be the prime matrix within which both group identity and group tradition are formed and relayed (Sapir 1949:363; Gumperz 1982), the approach here clearly neglects some central issues. Instead the relevance to language of these quantitative network and ISA indices must be conceptualised in more essentialist terms of the indication they're likely to give of the kinds of linguistic residue and disposition that individuals draw from past interactions and bring to those in the present.

In the same way, we can't regard whatever results emerge as an emic portrait of local communicative organisation as this relates to ethnicity. The analysis jumps too many semiotic levels; in addition, the model of domains is being used as a kind of survey yardstick, and ISA computational procedures may well not mirror the psychological processes of informants. These limitations do not invalidate the enterprise as a whole but it is vital to recognise them in order to understand properly what the methodology as a whole can and can't tell us.

Having said that, we can move on to the dependent linguistic variables.

## 2.2 Linguistic Variables

On the basis of pilot analyses and secondary texts (eg Wells 1973,1982; Gill & Gleason 1963; O'Connor 1973; Agnihotri 1979), four variants of (ɫ) - velarised /l/ in postvocalic preconsonantal or prepausal environments - were identified in terms of the following ethnolinguistic provenances :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| VocL | Vocalic L | non-standard Anglo |
| [ɫ] | lateral with back vowel resonance | standard Anglo |
| [l] | L with frontish vowel tamber | Caribbean, Indian & Pakistani (Punjabi) |
| [ɭ] | retroflex L | Indian and Pakistani (Punjabi) |

This variable provided an economical focus for looking at the career-in-contact of formally different sociolinguistic speech habits. In contrast, the second variable - word initial TH - gave more opportunity to see the confluence and reciprocal affirmation of 'genetically' different but formally similar phonological traditions that can also occur in newly polyethnic societies. Four variants were distinguished :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| [ð] | voiced dental-alveolar fricative | standard Anglo |
| [d] | voiced dental-alveolar stop | Caribbean, Punjabi, non-standard Anglo |
| Zero TH | | non-standard Anglo |
| ZeroTH in post-dental/alveolar environments | | |

It was decided to analyse speech from the second of the two ISA interviews, in which informants (in pairs or threes) talked about neighbourhood life.

## 2.3 Working the Methodology Through

In turning now to results, it is first necessary to outline the kind of imbalance, blurring and non-discreteness characterising the social field being investigated here. Firstly, ethnic backgrounds were not equally represented in the speaker sample. There were comparatively few ethnically Anglo and Afro-Caribbean informants and only one of mixed parentage. Yet this was a natural grouping, and it reflected the use of friendship ties in recruitment. So here was (part of) a social unit with a statistically inconvenient composition of ethnic backgrounds.

Secondly, it became clear that patterns of network association were not mirrored by patterns of group identification. In general, multiplex peer group ties were mainly co-ethnic and not many outgroup friends crossed into intra-ethnic domains. In contrast, data on psycho-social identification suggested that informants generally didn't identify strongly with ingroup peers to the exclusion of others. Most of the informants spread their strongest identifications across 2 or more groups.

Thirdly, analysis of the use of (ɫ) and (ɣ) in terms of ethnicity fixed at birth showed that there were no ethnically exclusive variants. Vocalic L was for example used a lot by non-Anglos, while amongst Anglos themselves, there were both clear and retroflex L variants.

Admittedly, non-discrete subgroup patterns of this kind constitute the raison d'etre of quantitative sociolinguistics and it may be tempting to criticise the vagueness here about ethnolinguistic patterning as simply the result of bad sampling. But this would be to contradict part of the momentum of the measures of interactive and referential group membership being developed here. Much of their central gist is to identify the ethnic distribution of linguistic forms not in spite of but *by virtue of the overlap and spread* of variants *across* ethnic categories. They aspire to say something much more concrete about the life of linguistic forms in interethnic settings than could ever be achieved by the investigation of 'bio-ethnic' subgroup means. By focussing on intersubgroup connections themselves, they can for example pick out traces of a variant deriving from contact with ethnolinguistic outgroups.

This is illustrated with [d], the plosive variant of TH. In terms of subgroup means, ethnically Pakistani kids seemed to use plosive TH more than the others, but nothing definite could be said (see Table 1). However when [d] was plotted against multiplex peer ties with Pakistani kids, another relationship emerged: the use of this variant by non-Pakistani informants was linked to the extent to which their multiplex associates were Pakistani (see scatterplot 1 ; the r coefficient from a Pearson product moment correlation was in fact 0.86).

The TH variable has been originally chosen in order to see how formally similar but 'genetically' different phonological traditions might fare in contact: although Pakistani kids obviously hadn't exclusively appropriated it, it did look as though they had the most important influence on its use in the multiracial vernacular. The data appeared to show the cross-ethnic ripple effects of plosive TH use amongst ethnically Pakistani kids.

In fact we could also go further with the aid of ISA, and ask whether [d] use amongst ethnically Indian, Afro-Caribbean and Anglo informants was systematically linked to psychosocial identification with Pakistani kids as a group. In the event, there was no evidence of any such connection, and theorisation of the language-network relationship for [d] had to remain couched in broad terms of interpersonal accommodation: there was no empirical justification for reading into it processes at ethnic-category level.

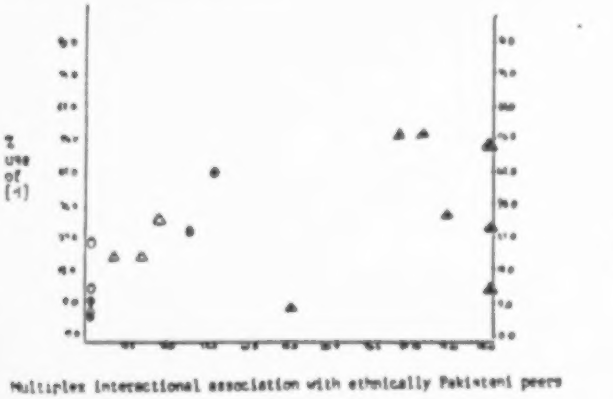
TABLE 1 MEAN % USE OF [d] BY ETHNIC SUBGROUP

| | Mean % use of [d] | σn | n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Informants of Indian extraction | 20.7 | 10.1 | 4 |
| Informants of Pakistani extraction | 36.7 | 18.2 | 7 |
| Informants of Afro-Caribbean extraction | 28.8 | 14.7 | 2 |
| Informants of Anglo extraction | 19.5 | 17.9 | 3 |

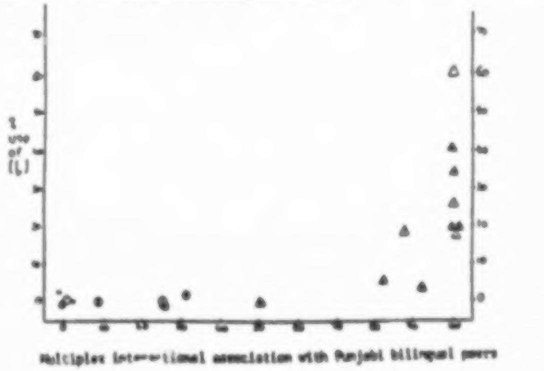
TABLE 2 MEAN % OF USE OF [ɭ] BY ETHNIC SUBGROUP

| | Mean % use of [ɭ] | σn | n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Informants of Indian parentage | 30.9 | 17.3 | 4 |
| Informants of Pakistani parentage | 18.7 | 16.6 | 7 |
| Informants of Afro-Caribbean parentage | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Informants of Anglo parentage | 0.4 | 0.5 | 3 |

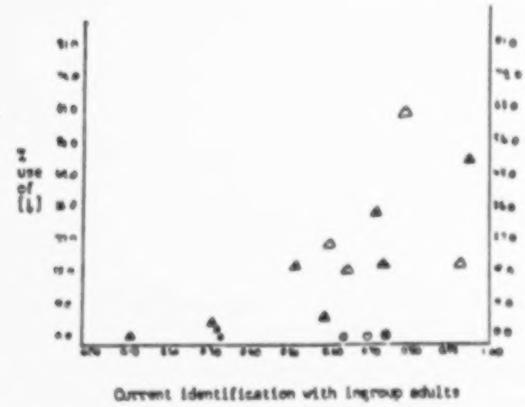
SCATTERPLOT 1 USE OF [d] x MULTIPLEX INTERACTIONAL ASSOCIATION WITH ETHNICALLY PAKISTANI PEERS



SCATTERPLOT 2 USE OF RETROFLEX [ɭ] x MULTIPLEX INTERACTIONAL ASSOCIATION WITH PUNJABI BILINGUAL PEERS



SCATTERPLOT 3 USE OF RETROFLEX [ɭ] x CURRENT IDENTIFICATION WITH INGROUP ADULTS



KEY:

△: informants of Indian parentage
▲: informants of Pakistani parentage
○: informants of Afro-Caribbean parentage
●: informants of Anglo parentage
◐: informant of mixed Anglo-Afro-Caribbean parentage

This progression from analysis of interactive to referential group membership was more substantively illustrated with the case of retroflex [ɭ]. Data on subgroup means had suggested that [ɭ] was on average used more by ethnically Indian and Pakistani informants (Table 2). Then, merging kids of Indian and Pakistani parentage into the single category 'Punjabi bi-lingual', it emerged that [ɭ] use amongst these kids was broadly associated with the extent to which their multiplex peer ties was also Punjabi bi-lingual (scatterplot 2). It was not possible however to go on from this and suggest that [ɭ] usage was a matter of solidarity with Asian kids : the ISA data showed no association between retroflex [ɭ] use and identification with Indian and Pakistani kids. However, amongst ethnically Pakistani informants, a particularly strong association was detectable between [ɭ] use and identification with co-ethnic adults ($r = 0.87$; see also scatterplot 3).

This was significant as an empirical illustration of the fragility of the interpretation of language network correlations in terms of solidarity. Retroflex [ɭ] use might be systematically associated with group solidarity, but the group concerned was plainly not the same as the collectivity reflected in the network measure. To explain the retroflex [ɭ] - peer network association it would be necessary to propose that acquisition and use of [ɭ] followed on from the stronger identification with coethnic adults which exclusively Punjabi multiplex peer groups maybe encouraged. Clearly this study was much too small to address this issue seriously (interaction effects being beyond its statistical scope) but the potential of the methodology for giving empirical access to more complex theoretical reasoning was evidenced.

In fact, this case study also explored other aspects of the methodology - for example it looked at the sociolinguistic impact of identification with interactively remote groups. We can skip these however and move to a final evaluation.

## 3. ASSESSMENT

We can begin with a brief restatement of the kind of understanding made available by this approach. Since neither network analysis nor ISA have directly addressed situated discourse, nothing substantial can be said about what for example [d] and [ɭ] are used to mean (the symbolic use of language variants can only be studied in particular interactions (Brown & Levinson 1979:325)). Even so, their combination can break down "proxy" variables such as ethnicity and class into constituent elements which can start to connect with the subjectivity necessarily entailed in any link between social organisation and speech. More importantly, the blend here of ISA and network analysis provides empirical access to possible imbalances between a person's interactional location and their responses to this.

Systematic ways of looking at this have not yet been developed in quantitative sociolinguistics.

However, was this methodology absurdly cumbersome and over-elaborate? Admittedly, with the network measure, it was a slow process building up the model of domains and then making a detailed analysis of where people encountered on another, but this was necessary in order to produce a fairly precise working definition of interactional association (see also Gal and Bortoni-Ricardo). In some sociolinguistic studies, the shift away from the a priori models of society entailed in the use of network rather than sociodemographic variables in fact results in their replacement with notions of community which may be almost equally a priori. This certainly occurs with the use of indirect indicators of network involvement (based on work, residence and leisure; cf Milroy 1980, 1987b; Edwards 1986:56-9). These tend to make large assumptions about who sees who where. In addition the conceptualisation of emerging scores in terms of 'levels of community integration' tends to be theoretically and analytically non-generative: interpreting network scores in such a necessarily general way closes off systematic investigation of the effects of different types of network association and means that any further examination of negative findings can only revert to sociodemographic proxy variables. In contrast, more precise measures allow one to specify linguistically insignificant network relations, and then to move on to analyse others.

What of ISA ? Was this too unwieldy? In technical-operational terms, ISA wasn't a lot less economical to organise than the speech evaluation methods which are commonly used by sociolinguists and indeed it had a lot of advantages over them as a way of investigating identification-language relationships (cf Giles & Ryan 1982). With regard to its conceptual rather than technical apparatus, the full vocabulary of ISA may well exceed the practical scope of sociolinguistics, but its more complex reaches can still help to constructively discipline the interpretation of findings obtained through merely elementary uses of it. Even though unoperationalised, immediate access to a conceptual system of this kind may partly counter what may be a microsociolinguistic tendency towards looseness with theory (Fishman 1981:163).

In several ways then, the elaborateness of this methodology can be justified. Certainly there are a lot of questions that still need to be sorted out: how far for example can the interrelation of different types of identification measured by ISA be tied in with language? how far should the comparison between ISA and acts-of-identity sociolinguistics actually be taken? Initially, intensive small scale investigations would probably be best suited to the consideration of these and other issues; however, similar combinations of ISA and NA might also be employed in larger scale sociolinguistic surveys, as long as researchers were content to take more for granted. One of the major practical advantages of the approach here is that given a minimum level of literacy, it could work equally well with groups defined in terms of class, neighbourhood, gender, occupation etc. Both ego- and group-centred analysis could be achieved, and in principle, ISA and NA could be used together to look at inter-individual relationships. So particularly when quantitative sociolinguistics aspires to develop its connection with extra-linguistic concerns, this methodology can be presented as a valuable step towards a more theoretically adequate but still quantitatively concise account of how group affiliation links with the social distribution of speech variables.

Doubts may remain, however: in particular it might be said that the exercise here has fallen rather awkwardly between two stools, on the one hand treating the purely linguistic dimensions of variation too cursorily, and on the other, neglecting key aspects of ethnolinguistic process (eg by ignoring the interactional enunciation of group affiliation, and by blocking out the symbolic and tropological dialogue around questions of social structural positioning that saturates many sections of the prequantified discourse). If such a line of criticism is adopted, it must however be recognised that its implications may well extend beyond this case study to much of the quantitative sociolinguistic enterprise itself.

The case can I think be made that the methodology outlined above stands at least on the threshold of a fairly literal operationalisation of LePage and Tabouret-Keller's hypothesis and riders (1). In addition, it is clear that for quite a time now, this hypothesis has stood as a beacon, an ideal of sociolinguistic analysis towards which a good deal of quantitative research has orientated itself. Consequently, criticism of this methodology may have ramifications at two levels.

In the first place, viewing this case study as an object that's been brought close up to the light source, we can start to wonder whether the illumination provided by the hypothesis and riders is actually sufficient. Crucial sociolinguistic processes remain obscure, and thus we may well ask whether it's now time to reformulate the hypothesis, giving greater centrality to the dyad, to interaction and to verbal style. At a second level, if this methodology does get close to realising what has so far only been an ideal, does criticism of it as an awkward hybrid in fact signal the onset of a renunciation of efforts to study intergroup processes alongside demographic speech variation? This second line of criticism carries the wider implication that variationists should confine their extralinguistic discussions to statistical questions of survey method, while researchers interested in language and group affiliation should move over to interpretive sociolinguistics more completely. My hope is that this case study's necessary (rather than contingent) limitations carry implications at the first rather than at the second of these two levels.

## FOOTNOTES

* I would particularly like to thank Dick Hudson, Peter Skehan and Peter Weinreich for discussions relevant to this paper. Misapprehensions remain mine. I am also grateful to the ESRC for supporting me with a research studentship.

(1) This is their theory:
'The individual creates his systems of linguistic behaviour so as to define himself both idiosyncratically and in relation to other people; so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, to the extent (a) that he is able to identify those groups (b) that he has sufficient access to them and the ability to analysis their systems (c) that his motivation is adequate, (d) that he is still young enough to change his behaviour and (e) that society provides him with feedback indicating what chance he has of success in his proposed identity' (Le Page 1980:1243-4)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

AFENDRAS E.A.(1979). 'Network Concepts in the Sociology of Language' in McCormack W C & Wurm S (eds) *Language and Society: Anthropological Issues*. The Hague: Mouton.

AGNIHOTRI R.K.(1979). *Processes of Assimilation: a Sociolinguistic Study of Sikh Children in Leeds*. PhD thesis: York University.

BERREMAN G. (1972). 'Social Categories and Social Interaction in Urban India'. *American Anthropologist* 74, 567-86.

BORTONI-RICARDO S. (1985). *The Urbanisation of Rural Dialect Speakers*. Cambridge: CUP.

BROWN P., LEVINSON S. (1979). 'Social Structure, Groups and Interaction' in Scherer K., Giles H. (eds), 291-341.

EDWARDS V. (1986). *Language in a Black Community*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

FISHMAN J. (1972). *The Sociology of Language*. Rowley: Newbury House.

FISHMAN J. (1981). 'Theoretical Issues and Problems in the Sociolinguistic Enterprise' in Kaplan R. B. (ed), *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*. Rowley: Newbury House. 161-7.

GAL S. (1979). *Language Shift*. New York: Academic Press

GILES H., RYAN E. (1982). 'Prolegomena for Developing a Social Psychological Theory of Language Attitudes' in Ryan & Giles (eds),Attitudes to Language Variation. London: Edward Arnold. 203-23.

GILL H., GLEASON H. (1963).A Reference Grammar of Punjabi. Hartford Connecticut: Hartford Seminary Foundation.

GUMPERZ J. (1982). Discourse Strategies. Cambridge: CUP.

GUMPERZ J., COOK-GUMPERZ J. (eds), (1982) Language and Social Identity. Cambridge: CUP.

HUDSON R. (1980). Sociolinguistics. Cambridge: CUP.

JOHNSON P., GILES H. (1981). 'The Role of Language in Ethnic Group Relations' in Turner & Giles (eds) Intergroup Behaviour. Oxford: Blackwell 199-243.

LEPAGE R. (1980). 'Hugo Schuchardt's Creole Studies and the Problem of Linguistic Continuua' in Proceedings of the Schuchardt Symposium. University of Graz. 113-45.

LEPAGE R., TABOURET-KELLER A. (1985). Acts of Identity. Cambridge: CUP.

MCENTAGGART D., LEPAGE R. (1982) 'An Appraisal of the Statistical Techniques used in the Sociolinguistic Survey of Multilingual Communities' in S. Romaine (ed) Sociolinguistic Variation in Speech Communities London: Edward Arnold

MILROY L. (1980). Language and Social Networks. Oxford: Blackwell.

MILROY L. (1987a). Observing and Analysing Natural Language. Oxford: Blackwell.

MILROY L. (1987b). Language and Social Networks: Second Edition Oxford Blackwell

O'CONNOR J. (1973). Phonetics. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

RAMPTON M.B. (1986) 'A Methodology for Describing Sociolinguistic Variability in Multilingual Settings' YPL 12 135-52

RAMPTON M.B. (1987). Uses of English in a Multilingual British Peer Group. PhD thesis: University of London

ROMAINE S. (1981). 'The Status of Variable Rules in Sociolinguistic Theory'. J Linguistics. 17, 93-119.

SAPIR E. (1949). Selected Writings in Language, Culture and Personality. (ed D Mandelbaum). Berkeley: University of California Press.

THAKERAR N., GILES H., CHESHIRE J. (1982). 'Psychological and Linguistic Parameters of Speech Accommodation Theory' in Frazer C., Scherer K. (eds), Advances in the Social Psychology of Language. Cambridge: CUP.

WEINREICH P. (1980). Manual for Identity Exploration Using Personal Constructs (2nd Edition 1986). Warwick University: Centre for Research into Ethnic Relations.

WELLS J. (1973). Jamaican Pronunciation in London. Oxford: Blackwell.

WELLS J. (1982). Accents of English. Cambridge: CUP.

# THE ROLE OF VERNACULARIZATION IN TANZANIA : SWAHILI AS POLITICAL TOOL

Joan Russell
(University of York, U.K.)

What follows is very much a preliminary sketch of the way in which, I submit, the recent history of the role of Swahili in Tanzania needs to be interpreted.

Cobarrubias (1983) is more than justified in pointing out that the ideological aspect of language-status planning is the most neglected area of language-planning (LP) in spite of the fact that ideologies underlie all forms of status-planning. The critical examination of a particular case of status-planning (and such planning is necessarily tied to corpus-planning) where the promotion of the language in question was overtly linked with the promotion of a particular political ideology is long overdue. (Recent useful discussions of the present status of Swahili have tended to focus more on the implications of its fluctuating role in the education system, e.g. Rubagumya 1986.)

What we are concerned with, in the case of Swahili in the post-colonial period, is 'vernacularization' - the 'elaboration of an indigenous language and its adoption as an official language' (Cobarrubias ibid : 66), 'elaboration'involving both internal modification of the written form of the language and the extension of its institutionalized domains of use.

It is important to try to go beyond broad categorizations such as 'vernacularization' (cf. 'assimilation', 'pluralism' etc.) for the reasons implied in Hymes' (1986) discussion of the danger of empirical inadequacy in universal frameworks - 'dichotomies and frameworks with few categories attract us because they offer order in a complex sphere, yet it is the hard truth that what goes on in given situations escapes such categorization'(ibid : 49). For one who has only recently come to the sociology of language scene, and LP in particular, this area of endeavour seems peculiarly rife with 'dichotomies and frameworks with few categories'. So I must say, at the outset, that I find dichotomous constructs such as 'diglossia' (and its trichotomous refinements) - and 'power and solidarity' - less than helpful in exploring the history of Swahili LP. Fasold (1984 Ch.2) uses Tanzania as one of his examples of multiple-language differentiation, all of which necessitate a refinement of the diglossia concept. The Tanzania situation is interpreted as one of 'double overlapping[1] diglossia', with Swahili in a diglossic relationship with English (as H) on the one hand, and with the local vernaculars (as L) on the other. But this model, with Swahili playing a dual H/L role, masks the fact that for the vast majority of the population the L role of Swahili simply does not exist i.e. for them English has no communicative status (see Ervin-Tripp 1978 and Cobarrubias ibid : 49 on the distinction between individual communicative intent and conventional rules of language use - it is the latter that contribute to the communicative status of a language). English is acquired in Tanzania only through the education system, and recent monitoring of pupils' attainment suggests that functional competence in it is only achieved when the language has been the medium of a complete

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 295-305
© the author

secondary school course (see Rubagumya ibid and Russell 1987 on the reasons for this). Rather less than 3% of primary-school leavers continue into secondary education (and primary school enrolment averaged across the country is accepted by educators and researchers as being around 70% of the primary-school age population (Carr-Hill 1984, B.Katigula p c). This figure, taken together with the knowledge that 'even though those Tanzanians who get higher education do so in English, their working language is in most cases Swahili' (Rubagumya ibid : 292) suggests that English in Tanzania has vanishingly low vitality for the bulk of the population, and the 'double overlapping diglossia' model[2] does not provide an adequate framework for understanding the recent role of Swahili in Tanzania.

As Le Page points out in his paper in this volume the term 'Swahili' means different things to different groups, and its use today extends far beyond the Swahili towns of the East African coast, which he likens to the Italian city-states. The reasons for Swahili spreading inland and then developing into a viable candidate for national language status in Tanzania are well-documented in Whiteley (1969) and Abdulaziz (1980). Its role of trade-route lingua franca during the nineteenth century expanded, during this century, to include functioning as the medium of basic education, as the medium of communication for supra-ethnic fraternal unions, anti-colonial movements and political associations. These functions culminated in the use of Swahili as a lingua franca by the nationwide network of branches of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) which worked for political independence and formed the first independent government in 1961. Swahili thus became, through proven use, a vehicle for national political organization. There appear to be at least three other significant factors in its success as a national totem i.e. as a symbol serving to remind citizens of their tasks and their relationship to the new nation.

Firstly, Swahili is an African language, and ethnically neutral. The speakers of the 'primary dialects' of the coast do not form an ethnic group of the sort sometimes referred to as 'tribe' and the term 'Swahili' as applied to them and their speech is, in essence, a cultural one. The speakers of other Bantu languages in Tanzania can mark their ethnicity by use of their vernacular (or 'ethnic language'); using Swahili fluently can convey various social messages, depending on the context of use, and these include : being well-travelled within East Africa, being familiar with urban life and having at least a modicum of formal education.

Secondly, quite disparate groups are able to identify with Swahili. The linguistic label 'Swahili' means to the Muslim literati of the East Coast something different (structurally and functionally) from what it does to second-language users who have acquired competence in it through the education system - and something different again to those who live in the remotest and largely monolingual areas and who have escaped the education system, and therefore Swahili, and have only minimal competence in it for occasional inter-ethnic communication. It is presumably because diverse groups within Tanzania can identify with the linguistic label 'Swahili' that it provided such a successful vehicle for the post-colonial rhetoric designed to mobilize the population behind the new government, in the early 1960's. If we look for just one parallel to the recent history of the relationship between the concept of 'Tanzania the nation' and its national language we find it in France, where French has been 'a major symbol of national unity and one of the main instruments of achieving that unity' (see Tabouret-Keller in Proceedings of Standardization and Vernacularization of Literacy Workshop 1986).

A third factor in the success of Swahili as a national totem is one which should not be underestimated, although it does not fit easily into the frameworks familiar to practitioners of the sociology of language. This is the factor of individual influence. Examples of the various roles of individuals in the development and promotion of their language abound in the literature on the history of languages. What we have in the Tanzanian case is an example of an individual - the first President, Julius Nyerere, who took the only obvious candidate for national language status and used it as a political tool. In doing so he extended its domains of use and thereby enhanced its status both inside and outside Tanzania. Focussing on the part played by an individual is somewhat at odds with much of the LP literature, but I believe that to rely, as does Williams (1986) for example, on the concept of 'the state' in relation to LP policy - e.g. 'planning and policy relate to the state', 'the shared interests of language-planning and the state' - is to risk overlooking factors which influence not only policy-making but also popular attitudes towards the language in question. Acceptability in LP is crucially dependent upon positive public attitudes.

It is not very clear from Nyerere's published writings to what extent he was aware of the social stratification within pre-colonial Africa. His writings give a very idealised picture of traditional African society and do not overtly acknowledge that various groupings came together during the colonial period only because each of them was adversely affected by colonialism (Hartman 1987). So one cannot be sure how consciously Nyerere's promotion of Swahili in the 1960's and 1970's was an attempt to try to use the language as a sort of 'social cement' - to emphasize that which the various strata of society perceived that they had in common. It was certainly used to help minimize any possible disillusionment that might be felt by the peasants and urban workers when it became clear that political independence did not bring the end of social control or an immediate radical redistribution of wealth (see Wallerstein 1961 : 86). In the 1960's slogans abounded. The pre-Independence slogan 'Uhuru na Umoja!' ('Freedom and Unity!') gave way to'Uhuru na Kazi!' ('Freedom and Work!') as Independence rhetoric developed into nation-building rhetoric. The Tanzanian experiment in one-party democracy depended heavily on Nyerere's own efforts, and not all of his colleagues shared his concern to promote constructive debate and widespread popular participation (Morrison 1976 : 22 - 3).

Nyerere was well-placed to know and exploit the value of Swahili as a supra-ethnic vehicle of communication, coming as he did from one of the smallest ethnolinguistic groups in the country, far from the East coast with its Swahili-speaking towns and far from the capital. Nyerere, during the two decades following the achievement of political independence functioned as 'national hero' in the way described by Wallerstein (ibid : 98 - 101) in his discussion of political hero-figures. That is, he was readily available, easily understood, symbol of the new nation, and also legitimized 'our country' by exhorting obedience to its norms out of loyalty to himself. And he was also a role-model for second-language speakers of Swahili to identify with. He was - and is - acknowledged to be highly competent in the language, as his translations of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and The Merchant of Venice, and his own political writings, testify. He is, above all, an accomplished and charismatic orator. The role of the skilled orator is an important one in preliterate societies and Tanzania, at Independence, was largely preliterate. Of necessity Nyerere found himself forging an immediately recognizable written prose style, modelled to some extent, and by necessity, on his oratorical style, and always tailored to his audience and current aims. Blommaert (ed)(1988), in his text analysis of Nyerere's 1967 position paper Elimu ya Kujitegemea (Education for Self-Reliance) notes, among other structural features, for example, the high incidence of the 1st Person plural pronoun 'sisi', and its possessive '-etu' in noun phrases such as 'nchi yetu Tanzania' ('our country Tanzania') and 'mipango yetu ya elimu' ('our plans for education'). Blommaert points out that in other written texts and in speeches Nyerere uses the 1st Person singular in relation to his ideas and intentions, and suggests that the frequency of the plural form in this text can be partly accounted for by the fact that it was intended as a working document, to be distributed to TANU officials and to be discussed at seminars; the use of the 1st Person plural pronoun is also a strategic device for signalling group membership and solidarity. In the following short extract from the 1967 policy booklet Ujamaa Vijijini (Socialism and Rural Development), which shows skilful use of various kinds of repetition as well as the '-etu' possessive pronoun noted above and the '-ao' 3rd Person plural possessive, Nyerere makes specific reference to the linguistic resources of Swahili. As part of his argument that traditional African society was based on an ethic of mutual dependence he refers to the way in which terms for kin relationships in Swahili are also used as terms of address and reference (for example a woman whose eldest son is Daudi can be called Mama Daudi, as a substitute for her given name) :

> 'Walijiona kwamba ni kitu kimoja; na lugha zao na vitendo vyao vilisisitiza umoja wa jamaa yao. Mahitaji ya lazima ya maisha yalikuwa ni 'chakula chetu','ardhi yetu', 'ng'ombe wetu'. Hata namna ya kuitana ilisisitiza umoja na uhusiano wa ujamaa. Binti Fulani au Bin Fulani; Mama Fulani au Baba Fulani .......'
>
> ('They regarded themselves as one; and their language and behaviour reflected the unity of their extended family. The basic necessities of life were 'our food', 'our land', 'our cattle'. Even their terms of address emphasized the oneness and mutual concern of the family. The daughter of so-and-so or the son of so-and-so; the mother of so-and-so or the father of so-and-so .......'

Slaughter (1985) has a pertinent comment to make in this connection : 'Political oratory based on oral modes ...... is highly formulaic ...... It has many of the qualities of a ritual - the exact content of the discourse being perhaps less important than the emotional effect .......'

In the period immediately following the achievement of political Independence language policy in Tanzania followed in the wake of the President's reactions to perceived crises, rather than as a result of concerted government policy. Hartman (1987) refers to the Presidency at that time as 'a state within the state'. The 1961 Republican constitution gave the President the power to act unilaterally, and although he did not very often exercise this power the occasions when he did so reveal themselves as responses to crises (and these help to account for the extreme policy-changes which the country has experienced). These were both external and internal in origin - the growth of the 'Wabenzi' (capitalists, i.e. the Mercedes-Benz-driving class), the army mutiny, the University student strikes, coups in West Africa. Hartman (ibid) gives several examples of responses to crises at that time. One of these was the publication of the Arusha Declaration in 1967. This was very much a product of Nyerere's own thinking, and was an ideological statement of egalitarian intent. Its major principles involved a determination to outlaw capitalism, to promote self-reliance, the work ethic and so on. The most important aspect, from the point of view of language policy, was the insistence that decision-making was to take place at every level of political organization, from TANU Central Committee through regional and village committees to the ten-family cells. Communication between the various levels would be through Swahili. The overhaul of the education system at about this time was designed to turn an inherited elitist system into one which more closely reflected a society with an agriculture-based economy committed to egalitarian development. One of the most revolutionary aspects of the 'Education for Self-Reliance' policy was the creation of a cycle of primary education designed to be complete in itself. This was linked to a deliberate policy of keeping the secondary sector small in order to avoid over-production of secondary school leavers for whom there would be insufficient 'white collar' employment. The complete Swahiliization of the medium of education throughout the primary school course was a major factor in the successful promotion of Swahili during the late 1960's and early 70's. What has seemed particularly anomalous is that, as pointed out by King (1984), for five years of the primary school course all children are required to study English, in which only that small minority who transfer to secondary education will ever become competent. This anomaly was heightened, during the late 1960's, by a number of policy statements on education (e.g. in the Second Five Year Plan for 1969 - 74) which made it clear that the linguistic gulf between those people educated through Swahili only (i.e. primary school leavers and primary teachers) and the minority educated through English was seen in government circles as at odds with the egalitarian 'Ujamaa' ('co-operative living' or 'African Socialism') policy. The Second Five Year Plan document pointed out that teaching through the medium of English provided an alien atmosphere for post-primary education, remote from the problems of the mass of the people; it referred to the expected localization of secondary school teaching personnel which would be completed by 1977, and which would facilitate a gradual transition to the replacement of English-medium by Swahili-medium teaching. The highly successful mass literacy campaign initiated in 1969 and implemented during the 1970's, and the Swahiliization of government administration have also contributed to the image of a successful national language policy.

There is ample evidence from a number of published and unpublished papers (e.g. Khamisi 1980, Mhina 1977, Maina 1977 a and b, Mlama and Matteru 1977, Mohamed 1975, Trappes-Lomax and Besha et al 1980, Hill 1980) that linguists and educationists - including university staff - were working on the assumption, during the late 1970's and early 1980's, that secondary and higher education would be Swahiliized, starting with the secondary schools in the mid 1980's. The government decision not to extend Swahili-medium to secondary and tertiary education has clearly disappointed many educationalists and language-planners (who for more than a decade have concentrated their efforts on lexicographical and technical terminology work). Occasional statements in ministers' speeches in 1983 and 1984 (Hikmany 1985, Katigula interview 20.5.85) were finally followed by a published statement in the Mfumo wa Elimu Tanzania - the government policy document setting out its plans to implement the recommendations of the 1982 Presidential Commission on Education. It is notable that the Commission's strong plea for the replacement of English-medium by Swahili at secondary level does not find a place in the plans for implementation. The fact that the English version states (Mfumo 3.10) 'English will be the medium of education at post-primary levels' whereas the more widely distributed Swahili version gives only the ambiguous 'Both English and Kiswahili will be used as media of education' (my translation) is an indication of the sensitivity of this LP issue. A number of writers (including Rubagumya ibid, King ibid, Mlama and Matteru ibid, Blommaert and Gysels 1987) have noted the equivocal nature of official attitudes towards English in the recent past. The status of English plummetted during the period of the most active promotion of Swahili, during the 1960's and early 70's, yet it is clear that education policy-makers equate successful secondary and higher education with learning through the medium of English. The implications of the linguistic gulf between secondary school leavers and those (the vast majority) educated entirely through Swahili have become unimportant since the recent ideological shift towards a less doctrinaire stance on 'development'.

The demise of Swahili as political cookie-cutter in Tanzania was foreseen by Whiteley (1971) who suggested that, as the achievement of political independence recedes into the past, the role of Swahili in that achievement is likely to cease to validate its continuing pre-eminence in society. The context of this prediction suggests that by 'pre-eminence in society' Whiteley was thinking of Swahili functioning in a greatly extended range of technical fields and as the teaching-medium progressively further up the education system. But the thrust of development in post-colonial Tanzania, initiated by the personal crusade of its charismatic first president, has been 'from the grass roots up', with emphasis on improved agricultural practices and basic amenities for the peasants rather than large-scale importation of industrial technology, and on adult literacy and (attempted) universal primary education rather than the expansion of secondary education.

For the mass of the people development in these terms has meant that Swahili has great communicative strength. Forced to use the 'power and solidarity' metaphor I would have to suggest that, for most people, Swahili has both. The power may have been covert in the years immediately preceding Independence, when overt power was in the hands of English-speakers, but it was power nontheless. And for most people power is still associated with the use of Swahili. And so is modernity (which is often linked, in the LP literature, with the use of a European language).

Modernity is open to a variety of interpretations. For the mass of the Tanzanian population (largely rural) it means literacy, accessible primary education, piped water, well-stocked village dispensaries, adequate provision of basic foodstuffs, comprehensible advice on how to improve cash crops .......... All the associated communicative events are carried on in Swahili.

The present de facto role of Swahili in Tanzania vis a vis English is very reminiscent of that of Haitian Creole in relation to French in Haiti, because as Cobarrubias (ibid : 56) points out, a language (e.g. French, English) may have high prestige but weak entrenchment relative to a particular speech community. English has high prestige in Tanzania, but very weak entrenchment; Swahili is very strongly entrenched .

In attempting to interpret the communicative strength of Swahili 'from the inside', to try to match the outsider-linguist's perceptions of the situation to those of insiders, in so far as this is possible, it is necessary to reiterate the importance of the link made above between the status of Swahili and Tanzania's particular hero-leader of the recent past, Julius Nyerere. Wallerstein (ibid : 99) has pointed out the importance of such a figure for making the transition between loyalty based on traditional social structure and loyalty to the artificial entity of the modern state, a relatively new basis for authority in Africa; 'the citizens can feel an affection for the hero which they may not have at first for the nation. Insofar as the hero works in tandem with a party structure, he provides a very powerful mechanism for integration of the state'. Even the most cursory glance at the state of the political art in sub-Saharan Africa reveals Tanzania's high degree of one-party political integration and stability; this is inextricably linked with the communicative functions of Swahili in society.

In the light of the above brief discussion, it very much looks as though the present policy-makers responsible for language-planning in education may be trying to swim against the tide.[3]

NOTES

1 Fasold (ibid : 45) refers to Tanzania as 'the former British colony ...' In fact, after World War I it was a League of Nations mandated territory administered by Britain, and after World War II a United Nations trusteeship, similarly administered. I point this out not through pedantry but to offer a partial explanation for the use of English being much less widespread in public life among educated Tanzanians than it is in, say, neighbouring Kenya - which was a British colony. The presence and influence of a relatively large number of (officially encouraged) English-speaking settlers over half a century in Kenya cannot be ignored as one of the factors contributing to the pervasiveness of English in public life there. (On another level, that of educational policy for the indigenous population, it mattered much less what the international status of a British-administered country was.)

2 One may also note that this model fudges the difference between the two types of relationship that Swahili is said to be involved in. 96% of Tanzania's languages are classified, like Swahili, as Bantu, and a speaker switching between her Bantu language (or, between one of the several Bantu tongues she regularly uses) and Swahili can be conceptualised as operating at different points along a sliding scale of 'Bantuness'. Switching from Swahili to English usually necessitates a much greater communicative effort, except in particular, well-defined and restricted contexts, such as academic discussion through Swahili during which English technical terms are used.

3 I have not mentioned the question of financial resources in connection with a Swahili-medium policy for secondary and higher education. There is little doubt that Tanzanian financial resources and the present infrastructure on which the education system depends would be insufficient for the successful implementation of such a policy. But it should be noted that, in the past, policy has not waited upon internal resources e.g. the mass literacy campaign and the expansion of primary education were both made possible by overseas aid (notably from Scandinavia).

## REFERENCES

Abdulaziz, M H (1980) 'The Ecology of Tanzanian National Language Policy' Polomé,E. and Hill,C.P. (eds). 139-175. Oxford OUP

Abdulaziz, M H (1978) 'Triglossia and Swahili - English Bilingualism in Tanzania' *Language in Society*, Vol.1 No.2 :197 -213

Abdulaziz, M H (1971) 'Tanzania's National Language Policy and the Rise of Swahili Political Culture' Whiteley,W H (ed), *Language Use and Social Change*. 160 - 78. Oxford OUP

Bloch, M (1975) *Political Language and Oratory in Traditional Societies*, London Academic Press

Blommaert, J and Gysels, M (1987) *Campus Kiswahili, Working Papers in Kiswahili* 1/1 Ghent University

Blommaert, J (ed.) (1988) *Ethnolinguistic and Kiswahili Rhetoric :'Elimu ya Kujitegemea' Undressed*, *Working Papers in Kiswahili* 3 Ghent University

Cobarrubias, J (1983) 'Ethical Issues in Status Planning' Cobarrubias, J. and Fishman, J.A.(eds) *Progress in Language Planning - International Perspectives* 41-85, Berlin Mouton

Ervin-Tripp, S (1972) 'On sociolinguistic rules : alternation and co-occurence' Gumperz, J. & Hymes,D (eds) *Directions in Sociolinguistics*, 213-50, New York Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Fasold, R (1984) *The Sociolinguistics of Society* Oxford Basil Blackwell

Hartman, J (1987) 'President Nyerere and the State' (Extracts from a paper presented to the conference 'Tanzania after Nyerere', S.O.A.S. 1986), *Bulletin of Tanzania Affairs* No.26 : 2 - 8

Hikmany, S (1985) *Ideal and Reality : the use of English as a medium of instruction in Tanzanian secondary schools* unpubl.paper University of York

Hill, C P (1980) 'Some developments in language and education in Tanzania since 1969' Polomé, E. and Hill, C.P. (eds) 362-404

Hymes, D (1986) 'Discourse : scope without depth' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 57 : 49-89

Khamisi, A M (1980) *The Use of Kiswahili as a Medium of Instruction* paper presented at the meeting of the Mathematics Association of Tanzania, Morogoro, Sep.1980

King, K (1984) *The End of Educational Self-Reliance? Occasional Papers No.1* Edinburgh University, Centre of African Studies

Maina, S J (1977a) Kiswahili kuwa ndicho lugha ya kufundishia katika shule zetu, *Lugha Yetu 31* (BAKITA) : 1-8

Maina, S J (1977b) Wakati umefika Kiswahili kitumike kama lugha ya kufundishia sekondari, *Tanzania Education Journal* 15

*Mfumo wa Elimu ya Tanzania 1981 - 2000 : Ripoti na Mapendekezo ya Tume ya Rais ya Elimu (1982)* Dar es Salaam. (English version : Report of Presidential Commission on Education)

*Mfumo wa Elimu ya Tanzania : Maamuzi ya Chama na Serikali Kuhusu Ripoti ya Tume ya Rais ya Elimu ya 1982*, Wizara ya Elimu 1984. (English version : Educational System in Tanzania towards the year 2000)

Mhina, G A (1977) 'The Tanzania Experience in the Use of Kiswahili in Education', *Kiswahili*. Vol.47/2 : 62-9

Mlama, P O and Matteru, M L (1977) *Haja ya Kutumia Kiswahili Kufundishia katika Elimu ya Juu* Dar es Salaam National Swahili Council

Mohamed, M A (1975) *The Introduction of Kiswahili as medium of instruction in secondary schools : a diagnostic and evaluative survey* Unpubl. M.A. dissertation, University of Dar es Salaam.

Nyerere, J (1967) *Elimu ya Kujitegemea* Dar es Salaam Government Printer

Nyerere, J (1967) *Ujamaa Vijijini* Dar es Salaam Government Printer

Polomé, E and Hill, C P (eds) (1980) *Language in Tanzania* London OUP for International African Institute

*Proceedings of the International Group for the Study of Language Standardization and the Vernacularization of Literacy* (1986) University of York

Rubagumya, C M (1986) 'Language Planning in the Tanzanian Educational System : Problems and Prospects' *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* Vol.7 No.4 : 283-300

Rubin, J and Jernudd, B (eds) (1971) *Can Language be Planned?* Hawaii University Press

Russell, J (1987) Tanzania's Language-planning in its Political and Social Context Economic and Social Research Council Report (C0023 2248)

Slaughter, M M (1985) 'Literacy and Society' International Journal of the Sociology of Language 56 : 111-139

Trappes-Lomax, H, Besha, R M and Mcha, Y Y (eds) (1980) Changing Language Media Papers from the seminar 'The impact on the University of the expected change in the medium of instruction in the secondary schools' University of Dar es Salaam 14-15 February 1980

Wallerstein, E (1961) Africa : the politics of Independence New York Vintage Books

Whiteley, W H (1969) Swahili - the rise of a national language London Methuen

Williams, G (1986) Review article 'Language Planning or Language Expropriation? Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development Vol.7 No.6 : 509-18

# ANALYZING ENGLISH LEXICAL ELEMENTS IN THE LANGUAGE OF DUTCH IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

**Henriette F. Schatz**

(P. J. Meertens Institute for Dialectology
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)

## 1.0 Introduction

In this paper I will be discussing an investigation of the speech of Dutch immigrants in the United States. I will do so on the basis of some data from a very large corpus of tape-recorded language material, collected in the United States in 1966 (cf. Daan, 1987). This data collection covers approximately 75 hours of recordings of 285 different speakers from nine, mostly nineteenth-Century settlements in Massachussetts, Iowa, and Wisconsin. All these speakers either have immigrated before World War I or are the children, and -- in some cases the grandchildren -- of immigrants from that period.

In choosing the speakers, the point of departure was that the speakers themselves, their parents, or their grandparents must have immigrated before the major social changes after World War I had taken place in the Netherlands, because these changes had a profound effect on the use and the nature of dialects in the Netherlands. The recordings contained free conversations, mostly on topics of interest to the speakers themselves, but sometimes directed by the interviewers' questions. The setting was relatively formal for a free conversation: the interviewers were two perfect strangers who elicited Dutch or dialect from speakers who often hardly used these language-varieties in their everyday life.

The original purpose of collecting the American Corpus was "to document the history of the Dutch language, its dialects, and the Frisian language in the United States" (KNAW, 1966:623). Expectations were that by using this method of data collection it would be possible to elicit and record data from older stages of the Dutch dialects, supposedly preserved in the American immigrant communities. These expectations were based on the notion that the immigrants would not have been subject to the same influences that conditioned dialect change in the Netherlands and would, therefore, have preserved older forms of the dialects. Having such older stages of the language on tape, as opposed to having them available only in written form, could provide a "dialect museum", as it were. Legitimate as this notion might have been at the time, it disregards completely that there could have been a host of other factors conditioning changes in the immigrants' Dutch dialects. As a result, the language corpus that was collected turned out not to be particularly useful for the description of older dialect forms. On the other hand, it does provide an extremely valuable source of recorded material for the investigation of a young language contact situation resulting from immigration. For this reason, a large-scale research project is currently underway to study various linguistic aspects of this material (cf. Schatz, 1987; Smits, 1988).

## 2.0 Language contact phenomena

The original purpose of my research was to study code-switching in the language of Dutch immigrants, on the basis of natural language data. In the course of my investigation of the available material I have gradually changed my focus to the general occurrence of English lexical elements in the immigrants' speech. In this paper I will concentrate on some of the problems I have encountered in analyzing a massive data corpus for phenomena of language contact and my ways of coping with these problems. I will first discuss the problems of defining code-switching and borrowing, as opposed to other language contact phenomena. Then I will show how I have narrowed down the characteristics of code-

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 307-316
© the author

switching and how I have operationalized them for use on my own data corpus. Finally, I will apply them -- in the form of codes in a computerized data entry form -- to a 2317 item test corpus of English lexical elements, in order to ascertain the feasibility of this method of analysis.

## 3.0 The available data

The more practical reason for a change of focus from code-switches, in a strict sense, to English lexical elements in general, was the available data. A direct result of expecting to record "earlier stages of Dutch" was that the tape-recorder was switched off at any time a speaker used more than a few English words. Audio-tape was still an expensive commodity at the time and, in addition, the interviewers regularly admonished the informants to speak only Dutch or dialect, an elicitation technique which is not exactly conducive to recording a large corpus of natural code-switches.

The interviewers' intrusions in the otherwise free conversations obviously influenced where and when informants switched from English to Dutch, as well as the number of English elements in the total language corpus. It is all the more surprising, then, that the corpus yielded some 12000 instances of English elements in the immigrants' spoken Dutch, counting only the data for the almost one hundred first generation immigrant speakers. The sheer numbers show that the use of English elements must depend on other factors than conscious control, and my eventual purpose is to determine what controlling factors there are -- linguistic and otherwise -- in the use of English by these immigrants.

## 4.0 Definitions of code-switching

A more linguistically oriented reason for investigating English elements in general is the fact that the more I attempted to focus on code-switching, the more elusive the concept became. It has proven quite difficult to disentangle code-switching, code-mixing, code-changing, borrowing, nonce-borrowing, lexical borrowing, grammatical interference, and transference. Often these terms are ill-defined, interchangeable, or even in conflict with one another. The concepts covered by them are all used in the theoretical and terminological discussions in literature about language contact phenomena, and the resulting confusion may very well influence the results of research (cf. Clyne, 1987:741).

My problem in formulating a tight definition for code-switching, borrowing, and a number of related aspects of language contact for the purpose of data analysis is surely familiar to many linguists. On the basis of some recent literature, I attempted to narrow down the factors that distinguish code-switching from other language contact phenomena. In the course of this literature review, I have become convinced that the characteristics that are generally employed to define code-switching and borrowing more or less cover all the distinctions between language contact phenomena as they may be found in the literature under a variety of names.

## 5.0 Defining borrowing versus code-switching

Reviewing a fairly arbitrary choice of some recent articles on code-switching and related phenomena (Aguirre, 1985; Appel en Muysken, 1987; Bentahila and Davis, 1983; Berk-Seligson, 1986; Crama and van Gelderen, 1984; Clyne, 1987; Gingrás,1974; Gumperz,1976; Kumar, 1986; Muysken, 1987; Moravcsik, 1978; Pfaff, 1979; Poplack, 1980 and 1987; Sankoff and Poplack, 1985; Sankoff, Poplack and Miller, 1988; Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan, 1985; Shaffer, 1975; Sridhar and Sridhar, 1980), as well as some earlier literature on the subject (Bloomfield, 1933; Haugen, 1950 and 1972; Weinreich, 1953), provided me with a choice of authors' definitions for code-switching.

| Characteristic | Borrowing | Code-Switching | Data US |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. single word | + | | + |
| b. both single and multi-word | + | + | + |
| c. multi-word element | | + | + |
| phonological integration in L1 | + | | + |
| no phonological integration in L1 | | + | + |
| morphological integration | + | | + |
| no morphological integration | | + | + |
| grammatical integration | + | | - |
| no grammatical integration | | + | - |
| no simultaneous integration on all levels | | + | + |
| mono- and bilingual speakers | + | | - |
| bilingual speakers only | | + | + |
| lexical need | + | | - |
| treated as part of L1 lexicon | + | + | - |
| relatively frequent word | + | | + |
| widely used in speech community | + | | - |
| recognition, acceptance, approval in speech community | + | | - |
| only from L2 to L1 | + | | - |
| only lex. items from L1 in L1 element and from L2 in L2 element | | + | - |
| L1 equivalent exists | | + | + |
| L1 equiv. always used in speech in speech community | | + | - |
| L1 equiv. known in sp. comm. | | + | - |
| Tags, interjections, idiomatic expressions, function words, yes, no, hesitations | | + | + |

**Table 1.** Defining characteristics of Borrowing and Code-Switching in the literature on code-switching and borrowing.

In addition, I found definitions for other terms, such as code-mixing, lexical borrowing, nonce-borrowing, transference, and grammatical interference. In effect, they often seemed to cover the same ground as code-switching or borrowing under a different name. I decided to focus on the distinction between code-switching and borrowing and listed all phenomena which, according to their defining characteristics in the literature, could be termed code-switching or borrowing, even if they were discussed under some other name. The definitions are given in Table 1, which also lists whether or not they can be tested on my data from the United States.

## 6.0 Analysis of the test corpus

From the12000 item data collection I gathered a test corpus comprising 2317 English elements. First I checked against two other data collections of spoken language whether this test corpus could be considered representative for the whole data collection (cf. section 7.0). Then I tried out the list of characteristics of code-switching and borrowing on the test corpus to find out whether such characteristics could profitably be used in the analysis of real language data. In order to do so, I operationalized them in a coding system and a data entry form. All of the items from the test corpus were then coded in a number of categories.

Some of the characteristics could not be tested on the Dutch data, simply because the information was not available. For example, since the data are all from bilinguals, differences between bilingual and monolingual speakers cannot be investigated. Information about the speech community in general, or information on speaker opinions, speaker awareness, or speaker knowledge could not be investigated, simply because it was not elicited by the interviewers. In Table 1, such characteristics are marked minus in the column 'Data US'.

The distinction between single and multi-word items is considered important in much of the literature on code-switching, so I distinguished between single and multi-word items.

Because many cross-sentential switches had been controlled or cut short by the elicitation method, I concentrated on intrasentential items and a distinction was made between inter- and intrasentential items.

The question of grammatical integration is also often discussed in the literature, either in general, or in particular reference to phonological, morphological or syntactic phenomena. For this reason a code was given to each data entry for which information was available about the degree of integration of the English element.

Whether or not another English element occurs elsewhere in a speaker's sentence can also yield information about code-switching behavior, so that information was also recorded.

I am convinced that the context of an element is very important. It is needed, for example, to obtain information about phenomena that often accompany code-switches, such as repetitions, hesitations, translations, reported speech, false starts, or meta-linguistic commentaries. For this reason the data themselves were entered in two ways: the string or single English element alone and the same element in its context.

Special remarks about a particular English element were also noted. Each data item in the corpus remains uniquely identifiable by tape number, informant number, and page number of the transcript, so if a larger context is needed for any reason, it is possible to go back to the transcripts, or even to the recordings themselves.

As far as grammatical categories are concerned, single items were coded for part of speech, while multi-word items were coded for syntactic category. In additon, I drew up a fairly exhaustive list of various phenomena occurring in the speech of bilinguals when code-switching is taking place, based on the literature about the subject (particularly Poplack 1980 and1987 and Berg Seligson 1986). These phenomena include repetitions, hesitations, false starts, translations, metalinguistic comments, etc., and I consider them characteristic for code-switching. All of these attendant phenomena were coded in a separate category which I termed 'code-switch markers'. Other information, for example on morphological or phonological integration of the English element or the occurrence of Dutch/English compounds, was coded under the category 'other information'.

A special category is formed by the list of what I have termed 'fillers'. These words or phrases are often used as a matter of habit by many of the speakers. I assigned them a grammatical code, like all other items, but, in addition, I coded them in a separate category because they differ so much from other English lexical elements, both in their frequency of occurrence and in their use in otherwise completely Dutch discourse. In an analysis of English elements, these items might be viewed as belonging to a separate category and occurring under special conditions that set them apart from regular English items. Since most of the fillers are to be found in the category of conjunctions, the number of occurrences in this word-class is relatively large.

## 7.0 Some quantitative results

In analyzing English elements from the point of view of code-switching, I focused on single-word items first, because they form the majority of my data, due to the limitations of the data collection itself.

Out of the test corpus of 2317 data items, 1471 (63.5%) were single English elements. Broken down by parts of speech (figure 1) the distribution shows that nouns are by far the largest category (24.6%). The next important category is that of conjunctions (20.3%), followed by adverbs (18.4%), verbs (including auxiliaries) (13. 6%), pronouns (5.3%), adjectives (2%), and prepositions (0.9%), while negations, affirmatives, determinters, and numerals form the remainder (14.9%). Excluding fillers, which make up a large proportion of the conjunctions, this category would only amount to 1.8% of the single elements.

In order to see whether or not this test corpus was -- at least to some extent -- a representative collection of English elements, I checked my results against the ones reported by Poplack (1980) for an English/Spanish contact situation and against the normal distribution of word classes for Standard Dutch (De Jong, 1979) in the expectation that I would find greater similarities between the two sets of immigrant data than between the word class distribution in Standard Dutch and the distribution of English elements in Dutch immigrant speech.

Comparing the distribution for single-word elements across word classes, the order of frequency is strikingly similar, as can be seen in Table 2. In the results reported by Poplack, single-word and multi-word elements were not considered as separate categories, so for the sake of comparison the percentage of the total number of English elements (including multi-word items) is also given for the Dutch immigrant data.

The 846 (36.5%) multi-word items in the test corpus were assigned to different syntactic categories. Their distribution in descending order is as follows: Sentence (21.7%), Indep. Clause (20%), Phrase (13.6%), Subject NP (12.6%), Object NP (12.6%), Interjection (6.9%), VP (5.6%), Comp (2.6%), Coord. Clause (3%), Subord. Clause (0.8%), Tag (0.6%). A comparison with Poplack's results for the multi-word elements yields fewer similarities for the two corpora, as can be seen from Table 3. Nevertheless, the general tendencies seemed similar enough to consider my test corpus representative for a large body of code-switching data.

| | N | Conj. | Adv. | V | Pro. | Adj. | Prep. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Schatz 1988 | 24.6 | 20.3* | 18.4 | 13.6 | 5.3 | 2 | 0.9 | % of sing. el's |
| | 15.6 | 12.9* | 11.7 | 8.6 | 3.4 | 1.3 | 0.6 | % of total el's |
| Poplack 1980 | 9.5 | 2.7** | 2.6 | 1 | *** | 0.8 | 0.1 | % of total el's |

* Conj. include 18.2% fillers
** Conj. include rel. pronoun
*** No data available

**Table 2. Comparison across word classes of non-native elements in the speech of Dutch and Spanish immigrants in contact with English.**

| | Schatz 1988 | | Poplack 1980 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | % of sing. el's | % of total el's | % of total el's |
| Sentence | 21.7 | 7.9 | 20.3 |
| Indep. Clause | 20 | 7.3 | 4.3 |
| Phrase | 13.6 | 5 | 5.1 |
| Subject NP | 12.6 | 4.6 | 3.8 |
| Object NP | 12.6 | 4.6 | 7.6 |
| Interj./Tag | 7.5 | 2.7 | 26.8 |
| VP | 5.6 | 2 | 2.2 |
| Coord. Clause | 3 | 1.1 | * |
| Comp. | 2.6 | 0.9 | * |
| Subord. Clause | 0.8 | 0 | 4.1 |

* no data available

**Table 3. Comparison across syntactic categories of non-native elements in the speech of Dutch and Spanish immigrants in contact with English.**

The following chart (figure 1.) shows the distribution across word classes of single English elements in the speech of the Dutch immigrants as it compares with the distribution of word classes in spoken Standard Dutch (De Jong, 1979). It is clear that the distribution of single English elements in the speech of the Dutch immigrants shows a greater similarity with that for Spanish immigrant speakers than for Standard Dutch speakers. This would suggest that -- at least for language contact with English -- the structure of English dictates to some extent which word classes are more likely to be the target for code-switching or borrowing.

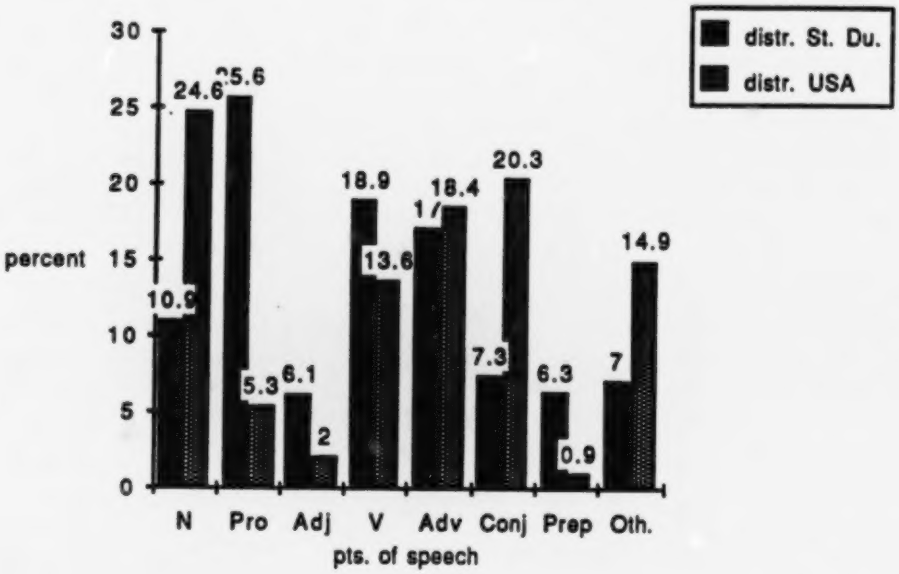


**Figure1. Distribution across word classes of spoken Standard Dutch and English elements in the speech of Dutch immigrants in the United States.**

As for the question of code-switching, I carried out a brief analysis of the distribution of 'code-switch markers' across single and multi-word items, in order to see whether these phenomena occuring 'around' English elements would help to identify code-switches. Out of the 1417 single items, 532 (36.2%) were fillers, which I did not take into consideration, so I was left with 885 single items. Only 116 (7.9%) of these were marked as code-switches: 33 hesitations, 18 false starts, 17 metalinguistic comments, 16 translations, 15 repetitions, 7 explanations, 5 proper names, and 3 other flags. For the time being, I also counted the 31 homophonous diamorphs as code-switches, because in effect they may belong to either code and it is difficult, if not impossible, to decide to which language these utterances must be assigned.

In all, 147 (16.6%) of the 885 remaining single elements could be assigned a code-switch marker, which implies that single items cannot clearly be defined on the basis of these markers. In judging these exploratory results it must be kept in mind, though, that not all single English elements will be code-switches: a substantial percentage of them should be English loans. They would not be marked for code-switching in any event, but the problem is that it is not possible to determine what percentage of single elements must be considered loans.

For the multi-word items the results were more informative. Out of the 846 multi-word items, 52 were interjections (6.1%) and 101 (11.9%) were fillers. These were excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 693 multi-word items 275 (39.6%) were marked as code-switches in one way or another (71 hesitations, 35 false starts, 22 metalinguistic comments, 16 translations, 33 repetitions, 8 explanations, 27 proper names, 45 other flags, 5 word-search problem, 4 changed interlocutor). The 36 homophonous diamorphs, were also counted as code-switches, bringing the total of 'marked' switches upt to 311 (44.9%), which is a substantial part of the multi-word items.

## 8. Conclusion

From the 'code-switch marker' analysis for single as well as multi-word items it is clear that the phenomena attending the occurrence of English elements can be an important source of information in the analysis of code-switching, be it more so for multi-word elements than for single words. It is also clear that the categories of analysis must be refined further, in order to determine which items must be considered loans.

Criteria of frequency of occurrence across speakers must be an important additional factor in this analysis, since loans are by definition part of the vocabulary of the speech community as a whole and must therefore occur in the speech of more than a single speaker. If a single English element occurs across the speech community with a fair degree of frequency, it can safely be considered a loan. This also applies to elements occuring frequently in the speech of one particular speaker. However, in the case of infrequent items such a decision is not so easily made, since it is in fact a matter of chance whether or not an item will occur. In such cases other linguistic information as well as sociolinguistic data may provide clues for analysis.

Whatever the outcome of further work on this data corpus will be, this brief analysis has shown that the investigation of code-switching and borrowing is by no means a simple and straightforward matter. Since the large data corpus under investigation here is more or less representative for the speech community and accessible by computer it will be possible to carry out a combined descriptive and quantitative analysis of switched language elements on the basis of these data. In my opinion, this type of careful analysis should precede any claims about factors constraining code-switching, both on a formal linguistic and on a functional level.

## REFERENCES

Aguirre, A., 1985. An Experimental Study of Code-alternation. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* , 53: 59-82.

Appel, R. en P. Muysken, 1987. *Language Contact and Bilingualism*. London.

Bentahila, A. en E. Davies, 1983. The Syntax of Arabic-French Code-Switching. *Lingua*, 59: 301-330.

Berk-Seligson, S., 1986. Linguistic Constraints on Intrasentential Code-Switching: A study of Spanish/Hebrew Bilingualism. *Language in Society*, 15, 3: 313-348.

Bloomfield, L., 1933. *Language*. New York.

Clyne, M., 1987. Constraints on Code Switching: How Universal Are They?. *Linguistics*, 25:739-764.

Crama, R. and H. van Gelderen, 1984. *Structural Constraints on Code-Mixing*. Amsterdam: Instituut voor Algemene Taalwetenschap.

Daan, J., 1987. *Ik Was te Bissie... Nederlanders en hun Taal in de Verenigde Staten*. Zutphen.

De Jong, E., 1979. *Spreektaal: Woordfrequenties in Gesproken Nederlands*. Utrecht.

Gingrás, R., 1974. Problems in the Description of Spanish/English Intra-Sentential Code-Switching. In: G. Bills (Ed.). *Southwest Areal Linguistics*. San Diego, Ca.

Gumperz, J.J., 1976. The Sociolinguistic Significance of Conversational Code-Switching. In: J. Cook-Gumperz, (Ed.). *Papers on Language and Context*. Berkely, Ca.

Haugen, E., 1950. The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing. *Language*, 26:210-232.

Haugen, E., 1972. *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford, Ca.

KNAW, 1966. *Jaarboek der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen 1966/1967*. Amsterdam: Noord Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.

Kumar, A., 1986. Certain Aspects of the Form and functions of Hindi-English Code-Switching. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 28:195-205.

Moravcsik, E., 1978. Universals of Language Contact. In: J. Greenberg. *Universals of Human Language*. Stanford, Ca., 95-122.

Muysken, P., 1987. Neutrality in Code-Switching. In: *Eigen en Vreemd: Handelingen van het 39e Filologencongres*. Amsterdam, Vrije Universiteit, 359-373.

Nortier, J.M. and H.F. Schatz, 1988. Van Eenwoordwisseling naar Ontlening: Een vergelijkend onderzoek. In: *Forum der Letteren*, 29,3.

Pfaff, C., 1979. Constraints on Language Mixing: Intra-Sentential Code-Switching and Borrowing in Spanish-English. *Language*, 55, 1979: 291-318.

Poplack, S., 1980. Sometimes I'll Start a Sentence in Spanish Y TERMINO EN ESPANOL: Toward a Typology of Code-Switching. *Linguistics*, 18:581-618.

Poplack, S., 1987. Contrasting Patterns of Code-Switching in Two Communities. In: Erlang Wande e. a.. *Aspects of Multilingualism*. Uppsala.

Poplack, S., D. Sankoff, en C. Miller, 1988. 'The Social Correlates and Linguistic Processes of Lexical Borrowing and Assimilation'. *Linguistics*, 26:47-104.

Sankoff, D. and S. Poplack, 1985. Adposition and Article in Finnish-English Code-Switching. Unpublished Ms., Université de Montréal.

Sankoff, D., S. Poplack, and S. Vanniarajan, 1985. The Case of Nonce-Loan in Tamil. Unpublished Ms., Université de Montréal.

Schatz, H.F, 1987. De Taal van Emigranten in de Verenigde Staten. *Taal en Tongval*, 39: 97-108.

Shaffer, D., 1975. The Place of Code-Switching in Linguistic Contacts. In: *Linguistic Association of Canada, Second Annual Forum*, 487-496.

Smits, C., 1988. Taalverlies in de U.S.A.: Generalisaties in Werkwoordsvervoegingen bij Nederlandse Immigranten in Amerika. Unpublished Ms.

Sridhar, S. and K. Sridhar, 1980. The Syntax and Psycholinguistics of Bilingual Code-Mixing. In: *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences*, 10,1.

Weinreich, U., 1953. *Languages in Contact.*. New York.

# LINGUISTIC MEASURES OF DEVELOPING SOCIAL GENDER IDENTITY

Marion Smith and Barbara Lloyd
(University of Sussex)

The research reported here is focused on sociolinguistic processes in children's construction of social gender identities during their first year of formal schooling. The study is being undertaken in parallel with a project on the impact of schooling on social gender identity: the development of a social gender identity is a complex process and involves many aspects of children's activities slowly coming to be regulated by the particular social representations of gender dominant in their society (Duveen and Lloyd, 1986).

Lakoff (1975) has claimed that gender differences in language use are established by the age of five. Support for this proposition has come from subsequent studies by Meditch (1975) and Haas (1979). However, while the distinction between masculine and feminine forms of discourse has been well researched, its relation to social gender identities has received much less attention. Practically all the research and theory in this area has been concerned with the question of group differences between boys and girls in their use of language, often with the inference that such differences correspond to stereotypical gender identities. More than a decade ago Bodine (1975) noted that gender differences in spoken language are preferential rather than exclusive, though the significance of this point has not been explored.

Children, of course, neither behave nor talk in exclusively stereotypical ways. Rather, previous research from members of our group (Duveen, 1984; Lloyd, Duveen and Smith, 1988) as well as other studies (e.g. Edelsky, 1977; Mills, 1986) suggest that children develop an understanding of both masculine and feminine forms of thought, action and speech. In each interaction the particular identity to be assumed needs to be negotiated. Current ethnographic observations in our parallel project tend to confirm this separation between children's gender identity as a persistent, more or less stable social categorisation and their use of masculine or feminine resources at particular moments. All discourse entails shifting positions, and shifting positions in children's discourse have been identified in some areas. Shatz and Gelman (1973), for instance, report the ability of children to modify the complexity of their speech utterances as a function of the age of their listener. Andersen (1977) has investigated the

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 317-328
© the authors

shifts in style that children produce for different roles in puppet games, and Streeck (1986) has demonstrated that children shift between teacher and peer roles in peer-tutoring situations.

Children's acquisition of language involves not only increasing skill in the manipulation of an expanding vocabulary, but also increasing skill in interpreting the talk of others. Neither talk nor interpretation are simply linguistic skills, but involve knowledge of social structure and its linguistic enactment (Edelsky, 1977). Both production and interpretation take place in accordance with a developing knowledge of what this social structure is. Most previous research on young children in this area has taken one of two routes. Firstly, researchers have looked for differences in language production that are gender-linked; and secondly, researchers have asked subjects for judgments - or interpretations - of specific linguistic features as 'gendered' productions. The two approaches are not straight-forwardly complementary: as Labov (1972) points out, judgments draw on knowledge of a stereotype rather than knowledge of the productions of actual speakers.

This particular project is looking at both recognition of linguistic stereotypes and actual speech productions. Over the course of 30 children's first year at school, we are gathering data from three different angles. During their first term, the children were video-recorded as they played in the classroom, so that we have a corpus of naturally-occurring conversation between age-peers. Ten girls and ten boys have also taken part in two tasks, presented in story-form, one of which assesses stereotypical knowledge of 'gendered' linguistic forms, and the other, children's associations of gender marking with specific actions, attributes, or situations which commonly arise in the classroom. The two story-tasks will be repeated in the children's third term, and a further corpus of conversation will also be collected at that time. The two story-tasks have also been presented to 10 6-year-old girls and 10 6-year-old boys from the top class of the school, as a contrasting group within child culture.
The remainder of this paper will be devoted to the initial results from the story-task looking at 'gendered' linguistic forms.

## Background

Since Lakoff's (1975) publication of her book on women's language, much interest has focused on adult speech, or the speech of older children, but little research has been undertaken on the speech of young children. Edelsky (1977) however sought to chart children's acquisition of adult stereotypes, and her work underlies our own story-task. Edelsky presented 24 sentences - a total of 12 forms each used in two different contexts - to subjects from four age groups: 6 years, 9 years, 12 years and adults. They were asked to judge whether each sentence would have been said by a man, a woman, or equally well by either. A number of subjects were then picked at random from each age group, and were interviewed about the reasons for their choices. Edelsky's procedures allowed her to count how often a particular item was assigned to men or women, to check on whether or not both instances of a particular form were treated in the same way by subjects; and to determine whether the judgments were based on knowledge of a linguistic stereotype, or some other aspect of the sentence. For example, 'Damn it, the television's broken' could be assigned to the man because men say 'damn it' and women don't, or for some other reason such as, that television is more important to men. Edelsky's results showed a gradual progression towards the acquisition of the adult linguistic stereotypes, although interestingly, the stereotypes were held most strongly at 12 years. Table 1 shows Edelsky's results for 6-year-olds and adults on the eight forms that we have used in our study.

TABLE 1. From Edelsky (1977)

| ITEM | Assigned to (gender) | Age |
|---|---|---|
| Damn it | Male, low consensus | Adult |
| | Male, high consensus | 6 yrs |
| Won't you please | Female, low consensus | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |
| My goodness | Female, high consensus | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |
| Adorable | Female, high consensus | Adult |
| | Female, low consensus | 6 yrs |
| Tag | Female, low consensus | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |
| Very | Female, low consensus | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |
| Oh dear | Female, high consensus | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |
| Command | Neutral | Adult |
| | - | 6 yrs |

Consensus: High = >70% to one sex, <15% to the other
Low = >60% to one sex, <15% to the other

Table 1 shows that 6-year-olds achieved Edelsky's measure of consensus on only two items: 'damn' and 'adorable'. She also notes that even here, children were not consistent in their judgments of the two separate instances of each item. In interviews, very few 6-year-olds could identify a particular linguistic form as being gender-linked, and focused instead on topic. They appeared to utilise two areas of knowledge for their responses: one is that a particular domain comprising home, clothing, babies and small things is female-marked; and the other is that being angry, mean and bad is male-marked. By 9 years, children can express knowledge of such stereotypes as 'men swear and women don't'; and 'women are polite'. But it is not until 12 years that children can maintain a focus on linguistic form. So, when looking at 6-year-olds, we would expect them to respond overwhelmingly to topic; though Edelsky did also note that 6-year-old boys were 'somewhat superior to girls in their ability to consider that there might be linguistic correlates of sex roles' (1977:243).

## Design of task

Given the 6-year-old results of Edelsky's study, 4-year-olds may appear to be an unlikely group for a similar study, firstly because of the difficulties of getting them to make judgments on sentences, and secondly because the results, on the face of things, would probably not be illuminating. However, (1) if a suitable way for presenting the task to very young children could be found, then as well as enabling us to gather this kind of data from younger children, 6-year-olds may also show more awareness of linguistic form. (2) Also, Edelsky asked children for judgments of adult speech: this (as she notes, p.227) is not a comparable task to asking adults for judgments of adult speech. Our aim is to get children's judgments of child speech. (3) Given that judgments arise from knowledge of linguistic stereotypes, and language is socially situated, then these judgments must develop from topic-based accounts like the ones that Edelsky received in her interviews. Therefore, although we can't expect much in the way of metalinguistic awareness from 4-year-olds (see e.g. Tunmer, Pratt and Herriman, 1984), a detailed study of the early, topic-based accounts that surround linguistic forms which later become 'gendered' may give us fresh insight on the development of social gender identity and its linguistic enactment.

## Method

Eight linguistic forms were presented to the children twice in two different contexts. Two items were altered to suit these subjects: as 'adorable' is not commonly used by English 4-year-olds (or adults), 'sweet' was substituted; and as 'damn' was considered rather strong school fare for children of such tender age, 'blast' was substituted. The test-sentences are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2. LINGUISTIC ITEMS IN TEST SENTENCES

Blast it, it's broken
Blast it, I've spilt my tea
I'm going to draw a sweet picture
What a sweet bear
Oh dear, I dropped the crayons
Oh dear, I forgot my scarf
Won't you please let me have the 'phone
Won't you please let me have the teapot
The water is very hot
I am very tired
We're friends, aren't we
I can go on the slide, can't I
Look how I go down
Look at me swinging
My goodness, it's time to go home
My goodness, what a mess we've made

A story describing an afternoon at school, having as its protagonists one girl and one boy, was written in order to present the test-sentences to 4-year-olds. The children are described playing together on a variety of toys. The test-sentences are delivered as speech referring to their activities. To help keep the child's attention, a series of pictures of the toys was shown. After each item, all children were asked who it was who had spoken - the boy or the girl. This proved unproblematic. Further, each child was asked on several occasions to explain their choice. The story-task was repeated with 10 each of 4-year-old girls and boys, and 10 each of 6-year-old girls and boys. Each presentation of the story was tape-recorded, and the tapes were subsequently transcribed.

## Results

The results fall into two parts. Firstly, we shall discuss the assignation of the test-sentences to the boy or girl protagonist by the boy and girl subjects; and secondly we shall discuss the explanations that the children gave of their assignations; and the relationship between the type of explanation and the linguistic form and/or topic in which it was embedded.

### 1. Assignation of items to boy or girl protagonist: Simon and Jenny

Tables 3 and 4 show the sentences that were allocated to either Jenny or Simon by at least 7 out of the 10 subjects in each age by gender group.

TABLE 3. ITEMS ASSIGNED TO JENNY OR SIMON

By Six Year Olds

By GIRLS

| Jenny (>7/10) | Simon (>7/10) |
|---|---|
| Sweet bear | Blast it ... broken |
| Sweet picture | Won't you please ...teapot |
| Very tired | Blast it ... spilt tea |
| My goodness ... hometime | |
| Can't I | |

By BOYS

| Jenny (>7/10) | Simon (>7/10) |
|---|---|
| Sweet picture | Look ... down |
| Sweet bear | Very hot |
| Won't you please ... teapot | Blast it ... broken |
| Very tired | Blast it ... spilt tea |
| Won't you please ... 'phone | My goodness ... hometime |
| | Aren't we |

Six-year-olds allocate both instances of 'sweet' and both instances of 'blast it' in the direction of the linguistic stereotype. The only other item on which there is agreement among girls and boys is 'I am very tired', which is allocated to Jenny. Apart from this, members of each gender group claim 'My goodness it's time to go home' for their own, and both sexes allocate 'Won't you please let me have the teapot' to the story-child of the opposite gender. This may be because they want to allocate possession of the teapot to the story-child of their own gender. Boys, however, also allocate the other 'Won't you please' item to Jenny.

TABLE 4. ITEMS ASSIGNED TO JENNY OR SIMON

By Four Year Olds

By GIRLS

| Jenny (>7/10) | Simon (>7/10) |
|---|---|
| Sweet bear | Blast it ... spilt tea |
| My goodness ... hometime | Oh dear ... crayons |

By BOYS

| Jenny (>7/10) | Simon (>7/10) |
|---|---|
| | Look ... down |
| - | Blast it ... broken |
| | My goodness ... hometime |
| | Sweet picture |
| | Oh dear ... crayons |
| | Oh dear ... scarf |
| | Won't you please..teapot |
| | Very tired |
| | My goodness ... mess |

What is most noticeable about the 4-year-olds is that 4-year-old boys do not allocate any items to Jenny - but allocate 9 items to Simon. This looks like a male preference for allocating the speech to Simon, particularly when compared with the girls, who only agreed on two items each for Jenny and Simon. Apart from this, both boys and girls associate one 'blast it' item with Simon, albeit different ones, and each claims 'My goodness, it's time to go home' for the story-child of their own gender. These are the strongest similarities to the 6-year-olds. 'Oh dear I dropped the crayons' is associated with Simon by both girls and boys, an item on which there is no strong agreement at 6; and at 4, 'I am very tired', which 6 year olds gave to Jenny, is allocated by boys to Simon.

2. Explanations and relationships with test-sentences
Table 5 gives examples of the children's explanations of their allocations.

TABLE 5. EXPLANATIONS FOR CHOICES

4-year-old-Girls

Blast it, I've spilt my tea
- because she knocked it over
- because he spilt it all over the floor

My goodness, it's time to go home
- because she wanted to go home
- because her mummy's there

4-year-old-Boys

My goodness, it's time to go home
- because he wanted to go home
- because he likes going home, so he went clompering home

I am very tired
- because he was just tired
- because it's been a hard day

6-year-old-Girls

What a sweet bear
- because she loved bears
- because she wanted to pretend it was a baby

Won't you please let me use the phone?
- because she wants to use the phone
- because she was the mummy and he was the dad

6-year-old-Boys

Blast it, it's broken
- because he didn't like things being messed up
- because girls don't say 'blast it'

Won't you please let me use the phone?
- because boys sometimes say 'I want the phone'
- It sounded like her. Girls do sound like that

In order to see whether the test-sentences receive particular kinds of explanation, a coding system was devised whereby each explanation can be assigned to one of 11 categories. These are as follows:

TABLE 6. EXPLANATORY CATEGORIES

1. Don't know/no response
2. Simple assertion (because she did)
3. Story logic (reference to prior events)
4. Circumstances (introduction of new material)
5. Actor (she kicked it)
6. Intent (she wanted to play with it)
7. Affect (she liked it)
8. Action or attribute ascribed to boys generally
9. Action or attribute ascribed to girls generally
10. Other
11. Reference to linguistic form

The main results of interest fall into the Actor, Intent, Affect, Generalised Behaviour and Linguistic Form categories, so our discussion will be confined to these.

### 2.1 Actor

e.g. 'Because he's the one that made most of it'
All children used this category equally for both Simon and Jenny, at both 4 and 6 years. This implies that being an actor or agent is not in itself gender-linked; and furthermore, suggests that items which are allocated and explained in terms of actors will not themselves be 'gendered'. This is borne out when we see which items attract Actor explanations: 'Oh dear', 'very' and 'My goodness' receive Actor explanations from both 4 and 6-year-olds, items on which there is no clear gender consensus.

### 2.2 Intent

e.g. 'Because Simon wanted to make it all up again'
There is no statistically significant difference between 4-year-old girls' and boys' use of this category to explain their allocations to either Simon or Jenny. However, boys use it for Jenny rather less often than one would expect. By 6 years there is a marked change: girls use intent for Simon more than expected, and boys do not use it for Simon at all. So there is little change between 4-year and 6-year-old girls' use of intent, but a statistically

significant change between 4-year old and 6-year old boys. At both ages, boys use this category infrequently for Jenny; at 4, intent was one of the most used categories for Simon, but boys' use ceased altogether by 6. This suggests that intent explanations would be linked to items that are gender-marked among boys. The only item that receives a clear majority of Intent explanations is 'won't you please'. This is not a gendered item at 4, but at 6 boys allocate both 'please' items to Jenny.

### 2.3 Affect

e.g. 'Because she likes the teddy bear'
Four-year-old boys use affect more than expected for Jenny explanations, and 4-year-old girls use affect less than expected for Simon explanations. So already at 4 we have gender-marking in affect, and the difference is statistically significant. At 6 years the same pattern is observed, although the figures just fail to reach statistical significance at the $p< 0.10$ level. What is significant for the 6-year-olds is the low use of the category for Simon explanations, and the much higher - almost treble - use of the category for Jenny explanations. This shows that by 6 years, explanations in terms of affect are not favoured by either boys or girls for Simon. This suggests that the strongest consensuses on gender-linking will occur on linguistic items whose allocation to Jenny or Simon is explained in terms of affect. And this is in fact the case: 'sweet' items are explained overwhelmingly in terms of affect, and at 6 this is the strongest gender-linked item. 'Blast it' items are explained in terms of Actor at 4, but at 6 Actor and Affect categories are used equally, and these items also attracted 5 references to linguistic form. The remaining two items, the 'Look at mes' and the tag-questions are also explained in terms of Affect at 6, but not at 4 These are not strongly gendered, although boys do assign one 'Look' item to Simon, and girls assign one tag item to Jenny.

### 2.4 Generalised Behaviour

e.g. 'Because she's a girl and normally boys don't draw sweet pictures, they sort of draw fighting pictures and things like that'
No 4-year-old gave an explanation in terms of the general behaviour of either boys or girls. We have eleven instances of 6-year-old use of this category in our data - and all of them were made by boys. As we see the expression of generalisations as an important step towards the acquisition of linguistic stereotypes, this finding is in line with Edelsky's impression that boys are in advance of girls in realising that there might be linguistic correlates of sex roles. It could also be, of course, that boys are more concerned than girls to mark a distinction.

### 2.5 Linguistic Form

e.g. 'Girls don't say blast it'
Children from all groups used this category, although as you would expect, 6-year-olds used it more (10 instances) than 4-year-olds (4 instances). However, as further evidence for Edelsky's point just mentioned, 4-year-old girls used it least (once), 4-year-old boys used it just as often as 6-year-old girls (three times); and 6-year-old boys used it twice as often as 4-year-old boys and 6-year-old girls (7 times). What is also of interest is the type of item which attracted an explanation of this kind. Most comments (six in all) referred to 'blast', four referred to 'won't you please', two to 'my goodness', and one each to 'sweet' and 'oh dear'.

## Conclusion

We are as yet at an early stage in this project, and the results must be taken as a first and tentative analysis. The most striking aspect of our findings is their similarity to Edelsky's work. Although our study is being undertaken in a different culture and more than a decade later using different procedures, the parallels are clear. Our 6-year-olds show greatest consensuses on 'blast it' and 'sweet', the items equivalent to Edelsky's 'damn it' and 'adorable'. Affect emerged as the strongest explanation for gender-marked items, and it has links to the negative affect domain identified by Edelsky. Further, 6-year old boys appear to make judgments more in line with adult gender stereotypes. In terms of the relation between gender-marked items and the explanations the children gave, we can see that our initial hypotheses of the kind of explanation that is associated either with gender-marked items, or items that come to be gender-marked, are largely borne out. This is important for the development of linguistic stereotypes, or of the ability to perceive in these terms. We cannot say, however, whether items which are not yet consciously marked tend to provoke explanations of a certain sort, or whether the nature of the explanation provides associations which become attached to linguistic items. That is, if the relationship we have found is non-arbitrary, then we cannot as yet say whether children fit their accounts to their choices, or choose in terms of their account, which itself represents their understanding of the event.

Finally, our results are congruent with our earlier work looking at children's developments of social gender identities. This showed that while girls and boys had equal access to knowledge of gender marking, it was the boys who used this knowledge to assert a social gender identity through the use of masculine toys in play (Lloyd and Duveen, in press).

## Acknowledgements

This research was supported by a grant from the Spencer Foundation, Chicago, Illinois.
We would like to thank Gerard Duveen and Nick Barley for their comments on this paper.

## References

Andersen,E (1977) 'Learning to speak with style: A study of the sociolinguistic skills of young children' PhD Dissertation Stanford University

Bodine,A (1975) 'Sex differentiation in language' In B Thorne and N Henley (eds) Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance Rowley, Mass Newbury House

Duveen,G (1984) 'From social cognition to the cognition of social life: An essay in decentration' PhD thesis University of Sussex.

Duveen,G and Lloyd,B (1986) 'The significance of social identities' British Journal of Social Psychology 25: 219-36

Gumperz,J (ed) (1982) Language and Social Identity Cambridge CUP

Haas,A (1979) 'The acquisition of genderlect' In M Slater and L Adler (eds) 'Language, Sex and Gender: Does La Difference make a Difference?' Annuals of New York Academy of Sciences 327: 101-13

Labov,W (1972) Sociolinguistic Patterns Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press

Lakoff,R (1975) Language and Women's Place New York Harper and Row

Lloyd,B and Duveen,G (In press) 'A semiotic analysis of the development of social representations of gender' In G Duveen and B Lloyd (eds) Social Representation and the Development of Knowledge Cambridge CUP

Lloyd,B Duveen,G and Smith,C (1988) 'Social representations of gender and young children's play: A replication' British Journal of Developmental Psychology 6: 83-8

Maltz,D and Borker,R (1982) 'A cultural approach to male-female communication' In J Gumperz (ed) Language and Social Identity Cambridge CUP

Meditch,A (1975) 'The development of sex-specific speech patterns in young children' Anthropological Linguistics 17: 421-33

Mills,A (1986) The Acquisition of Gender: A Study of English and German Berlin Springer

Shatz,M and Gelman,R (1973) 'The development of communication skills: Modifications in the speech of young children as a function of listener' Monograph of the Society for Research in Child Development 152 No.2

Streeck,J (1986) 'Towards reciprocity: Politics, rank and gender in the interaction of a group of school children' In J Cook-Gumperz, W Corsaro and J Streeck (eds) Children's Worlds and Children's Language Berlin Mouton de Gruyter

Tunmer,W Pratt,C and Herriman,M (eds) (1984) Metalinguistic Awareness in Children Berlin Springer

# MEDIATING SKILLS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY : PERSPECTIVES FOR BRITAIN

Jean Ure
(Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh)

I. The presence in Britain since the turn of the century of growing numbers of linguistic minorities has led to an increased recognition among the general public of the multilingual nature of our society. It has not, however, led to the widespread development of the kinds of social behaviour in contact situations that result in a stable plurilingualism - the kinds of behaviour that obtain in traditionally plurilingual societies, where citizens are aware of the variety of languages spoken by their neighbours and are willing to adapt their behaviour to help learners to learn to become bilingual and to go about their daily concerns using the language. When such co-operative behaviour is absent, this is likely to be perceived by members of the linguistic minority as a kind of rejection, particularly when they have already experienced other, unambiguous forms of rejection. It thus exacerbates for them disadvantages which are, in other respects, shared with sections of the host community.

To explain this rejecting behaviour one has to go beyond linguistics and sociolinguistics to the historical, economic and political forces that underlie population movements and the circumstances of culture contact. The behaviour, and the problems to which it gives rise, can be described in sociolinguistic terms, and these disciplines can give partial explanations of individual instances. Remedy is beyond the scope of applied linguistics, reaching far beyond the educational domain. However, the educational domain is itself part of the society that it serves, and may be the scene of developments of sociolinguistic importance that arise and have their ultimate impact elsewhere in the wider society.

This paper is concerned with 'natural' language learning and development through interaction, and with the way that progress is held back when help is denied. It is part of a larger study concerned with language socialization and its contribution to cognitive development, and in particular with second language speakers' experiences of helpful behaviour and its relation to school achievement and social adjustment.

Helpful behaviour can, of course, take place between any interlocutors at any time when a need for help is felt - encouraging someone to speak, supplying a missing word or a necessary explanation - but it becomes important when the interlocutors belong to different groups, in such a way that the event represents an encounter between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' - the insiders having in common a way of living, sets of values and a way of speech that is to some extent unfamiliar to the outsiders: it is particularly important when the outsiders, children or immigrants, seek admittance as new members of the group, needing to learn to come to terms with the sets of values associated with that way of life, the meanings involved in the interactions of the insider group and the resources on which they draw in expressing these meanings.

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 329-342
© the author

Typical of such outsider-insider encounters are those of the young child with teachers and older schoolmates in his first days at school; an adolescent in interacting with adults on first leaving school; a worker in a new job with new workmates. Thus defined it becomes apparent that the needs of first and second language speakers, and the means of meeting these needs, are very similar, and that similar factors condition their prospects when they move into a new language environment, of which one of the foremost is the presence of helpful people.

For people to be helpful, they must be able to sense what is needed and adapt their language behaviour. There are many ways of doing this, some to be discussed in III below, but not everybody has the experience to recognize needs or the goodwill to exert themselves, particularly where there is a clash between value systems and tension between social groups. Seen in such a perspective, it becomes apparent that success with language, whether it is a first or a second language, is to a considerable extent the outcome of interaction - a co-operative success - and failure likewise, a social failure.

Helpful behaviour in verbal interaction is referred to as 'letting-in'; the different manifestations of letting-in in discourse are referred to as 'letting-in devices' (Ure 1988). But where there is the possibility of help being given, there is also the possibility of help being denied. Where there is a need for help that is not fulfilled, this is referred to as an instance of 'withholding entry' or 'withholding support'.

II. Before going on to classify letting-in devices according to their functions it may be helpful to give examples. For English speaking readers it may be clearer if these examples concern not outsiders concerned with developing their skills in English, but rather, a native English speaker attempting to pick up the language of the country where she was working. The following comes from my own experience as a would-be learner of Akan in Ghana, and include both letting-in and withholding. The experience of withholding behaviour came first.

When I was in Ghana I could give little time to studying Akan and was generally, and rightly, considered by my Akan-speaking friends not to know the language. Once, in the common room, a group of my friends came in; I looked up but they passed me by and sat down quite near me talking Akan. They knew that I could not understand and sat turned away from me as they would not have done if they had been talking English. There was nothing in posture, gesture or eye contact to relate us as a group and I could not see their lip movements or expressions to help orient myself. I had wanted to try my limited skills in understanding, but the situation was hopeless; I came away discouraged. Some time later, in the common room again, a letting-in situation occurred. I was joined by two Akan speaking friends who knew I was learning. As we drank together they continued a conversation already under way, but used a variety of Akan extensively mixed with English (Forson 1979, 1968 ; Ure, 1973); we were facing one another round a small table. An important feature of this language mixing is the fact that cohesive relations extend between the two languages - so that items in translation relation can co-occur in a chain of reference. This kind of language mixing can provide one of the most efficacious devices for letting mature speakers in to a second language in a bilingual community. In the present instance I did not follow the details of the conversation, which was in any case none of my business - the purchasing of supplies for the common room bar. But I did hear and understand, in a genuine context of use, every Akan word for food and drink that I had learned (and my understanding was confirmed by translation equivalents that occurred elsewhere in the mixed utterance). And I was not excluded. I was as much encouraged by this encounter as I had been discouraged by the previous one.

III. Letting-in and withholding entry are concepts relevant to some of the more important concerns of applied linguistics, to the conditions of language learning, educational achievement and social adjustment. They are introduced here tentatively; more research is needed, but for the conduct of that research we need a provisional metalanguage, in which the functions of letting-in are more clearly specified and recognition criteria, or possible realizations, are listed.

Setting aside for a moment the question of realizations, which poses a number of problems, it appears to be useful to classify letting-in devices on two dimensions. These two dimensions roughly parallel the interpersonal and experiential functions in the lexicogrammar (Halliday, 1977).

| | |
|---|---|
| Collaboration, providing for ... | taking and ceding turns; giving encouragement, particularly to keep going in monologue; to express and take account of personal reactions, judgements and feelings. |
| Classification, providing for ... | awareness of the way language classifies experience; of the way partly synonymous utterances - paraphrases, translations, and quasi-echo responses, may imply different ways of classifying the same experience; awareness of metaphor, of incompatibilities, incongruities and ambiguities: range of potential meaning of items (Ellis, 1966). |

Of the examples in the previous section, the first, in which the group of friends failed to respond to my initial signal was a case of withholding entry on the interpersonal dimension. The second exemplifies letting-in on both interpersonal and experiental dimensions.

There are occasions when the outsider or new speaker attempts to initiate a letting-in. The term proposed for this is 'asking in'; in the first example in the preceding section I had made a non-verbal asking-in signal by half turning and raising my head; it was this signal, not recognized as relevant, that justifies classifying this non-event as a withholding of entry.

The possible realizations of these devices, letting-in, asking-in and withholding entry, pose problems of two kinds. They are very miscellaneous, so that any descriptive statement would need to be highly complex and the linguistic and sociolinguistic environment plays an important part in recognition. Also, being in various ways superimposed or inserted in a text that has other purposes, they are not easy to isolate, and difficult to quantify.

A discussion of realizations, with reference to the socialization of young children into English as mother tongue and as second language, is in Ure (1988), and some of the following examples are quoted from there: the reference given here is to the numbering of examples in that article. Otherwise the examples given here are mainly of interactions between bilinguals and in plurilingual groups, particularly in Ghana.

Realizations may be non-verbal, describable in terms of kinesics, as in the first example in II above (withholding entry): they may be paralinguistic gestures, etc., including laughter (Ure 1988:6) at incongruity in a child's utterance (classification): they may be interjections - "Gosh," a father's response to a child's story (Ure 1988:10), which appears to have both classification function (response to content) and collaboration (encouragement to continue). (For examples of non-verbal discourse acts see Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).)

They may be an insertion into the text, marked by a partial or complete break in cohesion and coherence. In 1 an old lady, who speaks only Akan, is discussing the possibility of getting a housegirl for a friend. The term Military Academy has to be explained to her.

1. Ɔye adwuma wɔ Military Academy (faako wokyerɛ asogyafo akrakyefo ade ho no).
(S/He works at the Military Academy (where they teach the army officers their job)). (Forson 1968)

Here there is continuity on the interpersonal dimension - in the transmission of factual information but on the experiential dimension, that fact of the soldiers' studies is not really relevant to the negotiations for the girl's job, and will not get mentioned anywhere else in these negotiations (classification). In 6 below, where the children are discussing a geometry problem, they claim turns, for themselves or others, crying "Listen". This is non-cohesive with the rest of the text, a break on the interpersonal dimension in the flow of information, and on the experiential dimension - no reference to geometry (collaboration and classification).

There may be inserted repetition, paraphrase, or, in bilingual situations, translation into another language. This is quite common where another language, still imperfectly known, is used as the language of instruction. The following example is from a Ghanaian primary school, class 3, held basically in English, with translation and explanation in Akan (classification).

2. Teacher: ... that thread is made of a certain thing which is called cotton. Do you know "cotton"?

Pupils: Yes.

Teacher: Cotton is "asaaba". Wonyim asaaba a? [Do you know what "asaaba" is? An explanation in Akan follows]

The letting-in device may be realized by features that run all the way through the text: the raising of the voice to a deaf man is a simple example (collaboration). The language mixing reported in II above likewise is a characteristic of the text as a whole, as in the following example, reporting a fatal accident on the road.

3. Student: Saa kwan no mmon de, every inch, misuro so. Misuro every inch of that road.

Friend: Yɛse two a-die at once. Baako wui on the spot, na baako nso, yɛse owuu Nkawkaw. (Forson 1968)

As this is the kind of text used for letting-in, I will not give a translation, but simply point out some of the translation equivalents in the text that make it so particularly effective: kwan = road; owuu = died numbers are not translated but 1 = baako, 2 = two; one important word is not translated - misuro = I fear, and it may not be known to an outsider that Nkawkaw is a town (classification).

Realizations of withholding entry are more difficult to identify, but there is the special case when one insider may warn the other to exclude a third party. When the outsider is a young child there is a tendency to use formal or figurative language, as in traditional sayings, or, where there is minimal bilingualism, to use a set warning in another language; 4b is a French phrase sometimes used in Great Britain.

4a. Little pitchers have long ears.

b. Pas devant les enfants.

In the case of adults, cohesive devices may be manipulated to withhold entry. Another personal anecdote goes back a number of years to a time when I found myself a member of a committee on which I was representing a minority viewpoint. Very regularly, when I had spoken, the leader of the other point of view would come in with "Yes, but ..." followed by an utterance that neither agreed as implied by the yes nor disagreed with what I had said, as implied by the but but simply did not cohere with it (withholding entry). Although I was ultimately proved right, this still rankles. On the other hand, and and but can be used to link consecutive utterances and establish a logical relation between turns, as in the case of the children in 6 below, and this can be strongly supportive. Such structuring is no longer a matter of letting-in, but an instance of the collaboration which is the ultimate aim of letting-in.

It is because of this great diversity of realizations that the term 'device' has been used rather than any attempt to locate letting-in directly in any type of structure.

One type of letting-in that can be quantified is the pause. Pauses are often used by the carers of very young children to encourage them to speak, joining in nursery rhymes and stories (Ure 1988:1-4), repeating items already familiar. In these cases the pause usually interrupts the grammatical structure, coming before the New element in information structure, memorable and phonologically prominent: the Given is the adult's part, the New the child's. This is primarily a collaboration pause, but the child at the same time becomes aware of information structure and of the sets of possible items that may occur at New. This kind of pause is used by the teacher in 5 below, and in assembling the possible answers offered by the pupils metal, steel, iron, tin, a lexical set is assembled (classification). Such pauses, interrupting structures in progress, are labelled arrest pauses (Sinclair 1966).

Pauses may also occur at the end of a completed structure. These are called *release* pauses. They have a rather different function, occurring frequently, for example in stories told by very young children, and often followed by *mm* or other signs of encouragement (Ure 1988:8-10). They seem to have a rather special kind of asking-in function - 'is it all right for me to go on?' - showing a diffidence that it is the task of the adult carer to dispel. The story tellers are still inexperienced in the solitary skills of the performers of monologue.

IV. In school letting-devices may sometimes be used by the teacher and asking-in by pupils in formal lesson periods. In the first example the teacher uses arrest pauses as in the following example:

5. Teacher: And now I've got this thing. What metal what material is this? ...

Pupil raises hand.

Teacher: Yes.

Pupil: Steel.

Teacher: No. It's not steel it's

Pupils: Metal.
Iron.

Teacher: It is metal, yes. Another name for it.

Pupils: Tin.
Iron.

Teacher: Tin, yes. It's metal and it's tin.

Pupils: 8 - 9 years.

This text, quoted from Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, is part of a lesson taught in a British school with a linguistically mixed intake having, in the early 70s, a population with 72% West Indian and Asian immigrant children. The teacher is supplying the Given and pausing to elicit the New in the same way as is used by the carers of infants.

In 6 a small group of children are working by themselves, following instructions from a tape recorder.

6. Recorder: Do you know what is happening to your shapes?

Aleem: Yes, I been notice what happened at first they go, first they go.

Patsy: I noticed

Aleem: Listen!

Terry: First they go in a square

?: sh sh

Aleem: No, yeah they in a square the other one it goes in a oblong, then again it goes in a square

Fiona: Our one

Aleem: then it goes in a oblong again

Terry: Listen, listen, your one goes in a oblong and

& Fiona: our one goes in a triangle. Then your one goes
in a square and our one goes in a triangle again.
Your one will go in a oblong and our one will go in

All: a triangle

Children: 9 years

Here too children supply New in information structure, a triangle, in response to others' Given, our one will go in ... In one case a child, Terry, recapitulates the Given, first they go, before adding his contribution, the New, in a square. There are also collaboration devices: one child cries out "Listen" to gain attention for his New, while others quell interruptions with sh sh, to allow the next speaker to take his turn. This extract is as given in Wight (1977), who comments that these four children have spontaneously generated the two principles for the bisection of squares.

In examples 7 and 8 interruptions are accepted as an integral part of collaborative dialogue. This is an informal register of English, learned in part at least through practice in letting-in, through making linguistic predictions, completing structures, following through ideas: it is a register of exploration and discovery, as distinct from the registers where prepared opinions are put forward in debate, or where teachers' dictums are reproduced with as much completeness and consistency as the pupil can muster. In 7 half a dozen children are sitting round a table grappling with the problem of division - the question is how to share out three bars of chocolate between eight people. Each successive contribution to the discussion is either co-ordinated or subordinated to what went before, so that the whole discussion could be interpreted as a sequence of clauses belonging to a single sentence - one shared logical structure - co-produced by three girls and a boy.

7. Girl 1 (pointing to segments on bars of chocolate):
It's like one eight there

Teacher: Yes.

Girl 1: and one eight there and one eight there like that

Teacher: Right.

Girl 2: and she said it's only one a person

Girl 3: but if you add those three eights together it'll be
twenty-four and that's three each

Teacher: It's three each.

All: Yea, Yea, Yea.

Boy (pointing):
because if you go down [i.e. the length of the bar]
then there's one, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
eight,

Teacher: Yea

Boy: and then there's one, two, three ... [i.e. three bars
altogether]

Children: 9 years.

This discussion took place in a primary school in Nottinghamshire, all the children being apparently first language English speakers. The text is taken from a programme for the Open University entitled Learning Together; it was argued there that when children collaborate in solving problems they do better than when they work alone.

In these examples, the speakers have become confident collaborators. There will still be certain features of rhythm, intonation and gesture that regularly help to regulate their turntaking but the more marked letting-in devices that we have been discussing in the previous pages are no more needed.

8 is taken from Barnes and Todd's study, Communication and Learning in Small Groups. Here a small group of secondary school boys are discussing the problem: "What would happen to the spaceman if he stepped out into space without a space suit on?"

8. Barry: It's like a diving, diving suit, i'nt it?
Graham: Yeah ... it's full of air
Barry: It's only full of air so he can breathe
Graham: No it, it keeps, it stops the er
Alex: There's so much pressure when he gets down
Barry: Yeah
Graham: It stops, it stops it from pushing it in
Barry: I wonder how fish and all them survive down there then

Boys: 13 years

The boys' utterances are understood as a coherent discussion mainly because of the referential chain set up by the recurrences of it. However, as the authors point out, there is a shift of reference; they comment: "The gradual translation of the referent it from the space suit to the diving suit through a period of indeterminacy is here intended to illustrate similar processes which go on in all conversations ... The indeterminacy here enables the boys to try out a possible relationship between space suits and diving suits before moving on to another topic, and this is characteristic of how meaning develops during the flux of conversation" (Barnes and Todd 1977, pp.96 - 8).

9 is not problem centred, and, though it takes place in the school, it is fairly informal: the issue is a matter of lifestyle and personal relations, two school leavers talking informally with a postgraduate student working in the school. The school is Vauxhall Manor Comprehensive in London; at the time the recording was made at least twenty five distinct tongues (languages or dialects) were spoken by pupils, but after years of education and peer group experience mediated by English these bilingual young people will have become established second-language speakers with native-like skills in a rich bilingual register range (Vauxhall, 1982).

9. Dennis: ... You've been with your boyfriends for two years. Is that a long time or a short time?
H: Well, we beat everyone in our class
T: Yeh.
H: 'cause whenever they come in and they say they've had a boyfriend and the next day we see them or the next week

T: they've gone out with somebody else

H: and they've packed it all in but they don't mind doing that.

Girls: school leavers
(age not given)

Here, as in the 'chocolate' discussion, a single question was posed and in reply two girls, thinking along together, have produced an integrated logical structure - one single sentence.

In this conversation and also in the small group discussions above, there are no longer any outsiders. Letting-in occurs only as part of the joint effort required by specific problems. The speakers have been 'tracking' one another as the carer does with the small child (Halliday 1977, Ure 1988), but in this case it is reciprocal, developing one another's ideas and carrying forward one another's structures.

V. So far we have seen how letting-in by mature speakers leads to peer-group support and results in success in problem solving. Similar findings were reported in Ure (1988) as regards pupils' response to literary texts and in their critical awareness. Claims that withholding entry has negative results are harder to exemplify and instantiate. But, as regards literary skills, creative and critical, we argued that the development of literacy, with the accompanying isolation of the writer, was liable to be practised at the expense of oral skills and thus could have a disorienting effect. bringing to some pupils as much loss as gain. The example was quoted of a young story teller (Ure 1988:8) who lost her skills when she was required to write and read longer stories at school.

In bilingual societies something rather similar seems to happen on a larger scale. The next examples come from Ghana, where English is a second language for many, in that it has its own widespread functions in the community, especially as language of education. However, in rural areas particularly, in the first years at school it is experienced as a foreign language, with relatively little exposure to it and the only or main interaction in English is with one, dominant interlocutor - the teacher: language use without letting-in.

Here a small pilot study of pauses in the language of Ghanaian middle school children is suggestive (based on a corpus collected in Aburi by a student of the Department of Linguistics at Legon, Ghana). Matched texts were collected from four school subjects with different activities: story telling, reading and answering questions, a lecturette on practical skills, and problem solving. Pauses at arrest and at release were counted and then frequency calculated according to the total number of clauses in sentence structure in each text. In all instances the pupil spoke in monologue, or in answer to the teacher's questions.

The first thing to be noticed here was that, in the question and answer sessions, unlike the English examples from Sinclair and Coulthard (see 5), teachers and pupils all completed their sentences both in English and in Akan, thus excluding the possibility of the most fruitful of collaboration devices - co-operation in the production of information structure. This is one of the common outcomes of teacher domination, resulting in pupil isolation and the production of a formal spoken style for which the model appeared to be written monologue rather than spoken dialogue.

The fact that the pupils did not perceive these questions and answers as being genuine interaction is shown by a certain lack of fit between some of the questions and the answers given in English.

10. Teacher: What was the sound which Heidi listened to so joyfully?

Pupil: Heidi stood behind the door and listened to the sound happily.

The answer had clearly been pre-prepared. However, if performance in other tasks is taken into account, this looks more like under-achievement due to nervousness - letting-in is confidence-building, isolation, the reverse - rather than a generally low standard.

However, in a genuine monologue, where pupils are asked to suggest their own answers to a problem story, pauses at arrest occur equally in both languages. The problem in this case is the old one of the ferryman with a dog, a fowl and some corn that have to be carried over the river. The problem seems to interest them and the pupils are not afraid to start talking in either language, working out their ideas as they go along; the break comes regularly before New information. The texts are marked with elements of clause structure, Subject (S), Predicator (P), Complement (C) and Adjunct (A); the relative length of pause is shown, approximately, by the number of carets.

```
           A     A              A     S     P                  C
11.    ||| And | then | ^ ^ (( after | he | has taken | the corn :

                         S    P       A     P       C
       and ^ ^ the dog )) he | will go || and | hide | the fowl ...|||

          A    S       P1        C          P2  A    S       P
12.    || na | me+ | +de ^^^ | aburo no | kɔ || na | m+ | a+bɛ+fa |

             C       P2
       ^^ ɔkraman no | aba. |||
```

and I take (hold and go) the corn and I will bring (take and come) the dog.

Between Mother Tongue and Second Language there are differences in the frequency and distribution of pauses and as between arrest and release. In English, pauses are nearly three times as many as in Akan, both types occurring in nearly all texts. In Akan, pausing varies from one kind of language use to another, and seems to function as a register discriminator; arrest pauses are more common, release pauses very rare. Akan story telling is fluent with no pauses of any kind; release pausing occurs minimally in the lecturette, where the pupil temporarily assumes the teacher's role; it does not occur anywhere else. In contrast , in English both kinds of pause occur regularly: they are most frequent in the lecturette, but there are no release pauses: it seems that pupils do not take easily to a teacher's role in a second language. The only situation in which pausing patterns seem nearly the same in both languages is in the reading aloud exercise, where neither set of pupils seems entirely at ease.

The findings reported here, though supported by other observations, are based on a very small analysed sample. More work needs to be done, but if it confirms these findings, then it will have important implications for education in a second language with its frequent concomitant underachievement, and for the development of bilingual skills.

VI. Monologue in the classroom, 'complete' utterances and the isolation of the learner from possible feedback and letting in, though occurring very widely, were described in the last chapter as being dysfunctional in the foreign/second language classroom. However, as a style such utterances have affinities with an area of language use that is important outside the classroom: that of formal debate and discussion. Its characteristics, of maximal coherence in following through a pre-determined argument, and carefully regulated allocation of turns, relate it to some of the main characteristics of traditional oratory, as well as pointing to some of the requirements of written registers. The skills may be being practised at the wrong time and in the wrong place - in the middle school - but they have a value that is recognized even by the pupils.

An example of this recognition comes from a Ghanaian schoolboy, commenting on the talk that took place in British schools: "They kept interrupting," he said "and did not seem clear in their ideas. Each one should think before he speaks, and all should have their turn." Similar findings are reported by Dorcas Orisanya of the University of Lagos. She tape-recorded discussions by two groups of students, one in Lagos, one in London, and found that one of the main differences lay precisely in the pattern of turntaking, the interruptions by the British, and the more patient courtesy of the Nigerians.

But in fact at this stage one needs to ask if the two groups of students are, in fact, doing the same thing. There are occasions where one needs to exchange ideas, and there are occasions where one needs to work out one's ideas, and for each purpose one interacts differently, and draws differently on the resources of language. There are two distinct registers (Ure, 1975), neither being fully effective without the other; both should be present in a mature person's register range; both should be provided for in education.

But in spite of the close functional relation between these two registers, they tend to get separated in people's minds - for instance much of the recent discussion of oracy in schools fails to make this distinction, partly because the domain of the traditional debating register tends to overlap with that of writing and the printed word. Also, where there is culture contact and bilingualism, it can happen that they get shared between the two languages of a bilingual individual's register range (Ellis 1984). And this is what seems to happen at a certain stage in Ghanaian schooling with the exploratory and interactive registers in the mother tongue, according to the findings of Professor Collison of the University of Cape Coast. Setting the same problems for discussion in different languages in elementary science classes in Ghanaian schools he found that three times as many hypotheses were generated where peer-groups discussed them in the mother tongue.

## CONCLUSION

Letting-in devices, as we saw at the outset of this paper, can occur at any time, in any situation, irrespective of register or discourse structure. But, on the other hand, there are certain situations where careful tracking and use of the letting-in skills are essential - certain situations of problem posing and problem solving where there is reciprocity between the participants, where there is shared knowledge, shared objectives and an equality of status in respect of the business in hand. In such situations the linguistic features that we have called letting-in devices are necessary features, part of the register, including the kinds of shared structures that we have observed here. This is what we called "thinking along together" - one of the cognitive skills which, according to our initial hypothesis, are facilitated by letting-in.

In these situations all participants are talking about the same reality; it is because of this that they can use shared structures and draw upon the same experiential meanings. What they learn from one another is to see this reality in a new perspective. There are other types of situation where each participant has his own distinct reality to propound: this is so with narratives (as exemplified and discussed in Ure 1988) in which narrators present alternative realities removed from the here and now. These broaden the mind in a different way.

It was said of the mother tongue that knowledge of the world and knowledge of the language are gained together, but, as this argument has suggested, the same is true in varying extent of any language that is learned through interaction, and learned for living. To get the opportunity to learn, to develop, we must be available to one another as speakers, for we are one another's best resources.

This is coming to be recognized by teachers more and more. It has long been the guiding principle of small group discussion. In second language teaching it has its impact. For instance in an enthusiastic paper, Helen Wagner (1982) describes how, in a class joined by two non-speakers of English, the whole of the rest of the class banded together to help them to learn. Knowing, more even than the teacher, what the language needs were, they worked out a syllabus and a method, and created their own materials. But more than anything else, it would appear, they talked to them and gave them a welcome; they let them in to the life of the school.

It was said at the beginning of this paper that success in natural language learning is the outcome of good will - a co-operative success in which all concerned can claim some of the credit. It is sad that a project like Wagner's, in which good will appears to have been one of the outstanding characteristics, should need to be presented as so remarkable and so new.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

| | |
|---|---|
| Barnes, D. and F. Todd (1977) | *Communication and Learning in Small Groups. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.* |
| Ellis, J. (1966) | "On Contextual Meaning" in Bazell, C. E. et al. *In Memory of J. R. Firth*. London: Longman. |
| Ellis, J. (1984) | "Some speculations on language contact in a wider setting" in Fawcett, R. P. et al. *The Semiotics of Culture and Language* Vol. 1. *London: Frances Porter (Publishers).* |
| Forson, B. (1968) | Description of Language Situations Classified in a Corpus Representing a Bilingual Register Range (Akan Varieties and English). Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Ghana. |
| Forson, B. (1979) | *Code-Switching in Akan-English Bilingualism. Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Los* Angeles. |
| Halliday, M. A. K. (1975) | *Learning how to Mean*. London: Edward Arnold. |
| Halliday, M. A. K. (1977) | *Explorations in the Functions of Language. London: Edward Arnold.* |
| Sinclair, J. McH. (1968) | "Taking a poem to pieces" in Fowler, R., ed., *Essays on Style and Language*. London: *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* |
| Sinclair, J. McH. and R. M. Coulthard (1975) | *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*. London: *OUP.* |
| Ure, J. (1974) | "Code-Switching and "Mixed Speech" in the register systems of developing languages" in Verdoodt A. ed. *Applied Linguistics*. Heidelberg. |
| Ure, J. N. (1975) | "Register systems of a language of $L_1$ and $L_2$ communities" Supplementary report of the Language Diary Project (The Range of Language Use among Primary School Teachers in Ghana), SSRC Project, H.R.2268/1. |
| Ure, J. N. (1988) | "'Letting-in' devices in the socialization of new speakers: cognitive development and the development of literacy awareness in first and second language speakers". To appear in the Proceedings of the Poetics and Linguistics Conference, Lancaster, 1987. |
| Vauxhall Manor School, Talk Workshop Group (1982) | *Becoming our own Experts*. London: Talk *Workshop Group.* |

Wagner, H. S. (1982) "Kids can be ELS Teachers" in Non-Native and Non-Standard Dialect Students. Classroom Practices in Teaching English. Illinois: NCTE, Candes Carter Chain, Urbana Illinois.

Wight, J. (1977) "The Normal Classroom as a context for EL2 learning". Papers distributed at Seminar Languages for Life, British Association for Applied Linguistics.

---

NOTE

This paper is part of an ongoing study of language learning, letting-in devices and cognitive development. The focus of the first paper (Ure, 1988) is on letting-in devices in the mother tongue and in informal second language learning; and a further paper discusses functions of family anecdotes of children's sayings and other oral mini-genres as part of traditional provision for developing the child's linguistic awareness and abilities (Ure forthcoming).

The preliminary research for this study was undertaken with support of a personal research grant from the E.S.R.C., which is gratefully acknowledged.

Earlier drafts of this paper were read by Ruqaiya Hasan and late Jeffrey Ellis; I am much indebted to both of these, and also to Lawrence Owusu-Ansah, for valuable comments.

# A PARADIGM REGAINED: CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE ON LANGUAGE USE IN BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

Eddie Williams
(Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Reading)

This paper is concerned with theory in that it questions the validity of the dominant paradigm in British and North American sociolinguistics. 'Paradigm' here refers to a particular research tradition which governs the way an academic community views its discipline, in terms of defining concepts, specifying methods and identifing problems that 'while the paradigm is taken for granted, can be assumed to have solutions. To a great extent, these are the only problems that the community will admit as scientific ... A paradigm can ... even insulate the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to puzzle forms in terms of the conceptual ... tools the paradigm supplies' (Kuhn, 1970:37).

One of the advantages of a paradigm is that it generates theories; a related disadvantage alluded to by Kuhn is that the theories generated will be restricted to the concerns of that paradigm. The dominant paradigm in British and North American sociolinguistics and bilingual education in recent times has been the consensus paradigm, and this has resulted in defective theories of language use, and misguided policies in bilingual education. There is sufficient evidence to warrant serious consideration of an alternative paradigm, the conflict paradigm, which has had considerable influence in sociology, but has been relatively neglected by those working in sociolinguistics and bilingual education (among the exceptions are Brent-Palmer, 1979 and Paulston, 1980).

## The Consensus Paradigm

Social scientists working in a consensus paradigm see society as an aggregate operating on the basis of agreement between its constituent elements, working to the benefit of the aggregate. The best-known of the consensus oriented theories is structural-functionalism (hereafter S-F). Briefly put, S-F sees society as a system of institutions which are mutually supportive and where each contributes to the system as a whole, thus maintaining it in a state of equilibrium. Its most ardent proponent in Britain was the social anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown (eg 1952), while in North America it has been exemplified in the work of Parsons (eg 1951). Structural-functionalists were particularly given to comparing society to a living organism (cf Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:12), where heart, lungs etc are the components, each serving a particular function, and each contributing to the maintenance of the organism as a whole. The function of culture, according to Radcliffe-Brown is to unite individuals into 'stable systems of groups determining and regulating the relation of these individuals to one another, and providing such external adaptation to the physical

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 343-353
© the author

environment, and such internal adaptation between the component individuals or groups, as to make possible an ordered social life' (1931:13).

Two criticisms can be made of S-F theory. First the functions for social institutions and usages are attributed on an ad hoc basis. Fishman, for example, says 'no society needs or has two languages for the same function' (1976:110). So, if a society does have two languages, sociolinguists working within a consensus paradigm find two different functions for them (typically the functions adduced are concerned with marking formality or the lack of it). Likewise diglossia as a social institution would be functionally explained as promoting group solidarity through the overt realization of shared norms for language use.

The second criticism is that strict S-F cannot account for social change - if a society is in a state of equilibrium then there will simply be no motivation for change. Change in the S-F view is seen as the accommodation of dysfunctional elements, originating outside the system, leading to adaptation and a renewed condition of equilibrium by the remainder of the system. Periods when a society lacks consensus are seen as temporary. Fishman, for example, says that 'bilingualism without diglossia tends to be transitional' (1970:87). In short, the normal condition of society is seen as one of stability deriving from consensus.

## The Conflict Paradigm

Variant theories in the conflict paradigm see the S-F concept of society as a benign system of self-regulating mechanisms as a fundamental misrepresentation. Classical marxist theory considers that conflict occurs in terms of socio-economic class; neo-marxist theory expands this to conflict of groups in terms of cultural values (cf Williams, 1982; Paulston, 1982). Society in a conflict paradigm is viewed not as a whole in a state of equilibrium with disequilibrium as a pathological condition, but as a system where conflict and contradiction is inherent. The metaphor is not that of a living organism, but rather of a stage where conflict is endlessly played out.

The Catalonian sociolinguist Ninyoles (1979:19) distinguishes three meanings of conflict in society: (i) in terms of opposition of interest (ii) in terms of opposing action (iii) in terms of violent and opposing action. The first meaning - opposition of interest - is a sufficient condition for the existence of conflict in society. Such hidden or structural conflict does not necessarily imply overt aggression or rebellion; these would be simply manifestations of opposing interests. Structural conflict can therefore be present in a society without members of the groups concerned being aware of it. This will typically be the case for dominant group members who may be surprised or perplexed when violent minority group action occurs. On a human level individual majority group members may feel sympathy for the minority group. Indeed, in any given situation, observers tend to pass value judgements on groups; these judgements are not, of course, generated by the theory, which is value free in that it does not attribute worth or lack of it to any group.

The view to be put forward here is that theories in a conflict paradigm are more powerful than those in a consensus paradigm in that they account more comprehensively for observed phenomena in language use and language learning. Further, language policies in education which are based on consensus theories are likely to be counterproductive, since they are themselves based on invalid theories. There is nothing as dangerous as a bad theory.

## Language Use

One of the most widely propagated theories for the alternate use of two languages in society is that of diglossia, used here to refer to the occurence of 'functionally differentiated varieties of whatever kind' (Fishman, 1970:74). The theory is clearly a structural-functional one, within the consensus paradigm. It says that there will be social consensus in the form of shared norms for use, so that all members of the society will know who speaks what to whom, where and when (cf Fishman, 1965). By following the norms, members of society are contributing to social solidarity.

If a group begins to break the norms, this is seen as a new development, rather than as the realisation of a conflict that was always present. As Blanc and Hamers point out (1983:212): 'a minority group is defined as such by the majority group ..... and is characterised by the fact that it lacks the power of decision over its own fate' (my translation). The minority or dominated group (I use the terms here without distinction) is powerless as regards language choice in cross group communication. Its language will tend to occur in domains where majority group members are absent, typically domains involving minority ingroup transactions (cf Brent-Palmer, 1979:156). The norms for use, in effect, are dictated by the majority group.

Obedience to norms, however, should not be mistaken for consensus, though it is so mistaken, particularly if maintained over a long period of time. When the relative socio-economic status of groups begins to change, however (cf Bourhis et al, 1979:163 for Belgium; Heller, 1982:109, for Québec), then the dominated group may reject the dominant group's language norms. Faced with this, the dominant group member may be puzzled. Thus Heller (1972:108) claims that 'Something strange is going on in Montréal. Every encounter between strangers has become a political act...the fact that conversation often halts and negotiations often have to be made in explicit terms is evidence, I think, of the necessity of shared social knowledge and norms of language use in order for conversations to take place.' One sees her point. The question is, which group is to have the legitimising power over the norms? Which group, in other words, is to make the rules?

In similar vein Lambert (1979:186) regards it as one of the 'puzzling features of the world' that 'a new form of xenophobia has taken root, making it uncomfortable if not impossible for certain ethnolinguistic groups to live together harmoniously within a common social system ..... the underlying logic of this seems to be: we have our own unique culture and language and these give us distictive styles of personality and distinctive modes of thought. Today there is a warning attached: trespassers or potential eroders, beware!' Without being explicitly stated, notions of consensus underlie these sentiments. Lambert confesses himself puzzled and uncomfortable. But, one might ask, has everyone been comfortable up to now?

One connotation of 'comfort' is familiarity, originating in the absence of change. Diglossia, claims Ninyoles (1972:54), is basically a conservative theory: 'diglossic ideologies aim to stabilise as an ideal a situation which, in our view, lacks stability or equilibrium ..... Diglossic ideologies are, in our view, strictly conservative. They aim to perpetuate the status quo, and ignore, or categorically deny, the real disjunction: the dilemma between language shift or normalisation' (my translation). The dilemma referred to is between a 'language shift' to Castilian or 'normalisation' through use of Catalan in all domains in the Catalan areas. Far from being evidence of consensus, a diglossic situation indicates structural conflict, though it is only when this manifests itself as contrary action that majority group members become aware of it and feel puzzled and uncomfortable.

## Education in Bilingual Contexts

At one extreme, education programmes in bilingual contexts may pay no attention to the child's home language whatsoever. The child is 'submerged' in the dominant language, which is used by the teachers and most of the child's peers. Programmes that are more child-centered may use the child's home language in the initial stages of education. Other programmes again may use the child's home language for certain subjects, or for certain parts of the day, or may even allow teachers to alternate languages in a subjective manner (cf Gaarder, 1978:37).

The role that is allocated to the minority and majority languages is, of course, a key issue. Fishman (1976:109) suggests organising the programme to reflect the fact that 'languages are not functionally equal' adding that, 'the sociology of bilingual education must be concerned with the power differentials of language in the real world'. The purpose of bilingual education for Fishman however, is not simply to reflect social differences in the school, but to promote understanding. His view is that 'no society, not even those where bilingualism has been most widespread and most stable, raises its children with two mother tongues. There is always an "other" tongue ..... Nevertheless, the other tongue need not connote things foreign and fearful; indeed, given sufficient societal commitment in that direction, bilingual education can be a powerful assisting force on behalf of divesting the "other" tongue and the "other" group of its foreignness. That is exactly what bilingual education at its best is all about.' (1976:111). Fishman's plea for tolerance here is laudable, but his position takes for granted the maintenance of existing power relationships between groups.

A alternative view is that bilingual programmes should not attempt to mirror society in the manner suggested by Fishman, but rather give disproportionate prominence to the socially 'weaker' language. This (avoiding discussions of what is meant by "society") is the case of Welsh-medium schools in South Wales and French immersion programmes in Canada. Nonetheless, whatever the characteristics of particular programmes, one highly consistent finding from the considerable body of research that has been carried out (for reviews see Ogbu, 1978; Cummins, 1984) is that a home-school language switch results in 'high levels of functional bilingualism and academic achievement in middle class majority language children' yet leads to 'inadequate command of both first and second languages and poor academic achievement in many minority children' (Cummins, 1978 cited in Paulston, 1980:5; see also Cummins, 1986:22). In the case of minority group children, their participation in a bilingual programme (or a monolingual submersion programme) is generally not a matter of choice, but rather one of 'obligatory bilingualism' (cf Gaarder, 1978:34). Such is the situation of Finns in Sweden (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1978), Hispanic students in Texas (Ortiz and Yates, 1983) and Franco-Ontarians in Canada (Cummins, 1984). In all cases the groups demonstrate a relative lack of academic success.

One might attempt to explain these results by putting forward various linguistically oriented reasons: that pupils have had insufficient exposure to the target language; that they are competent, but in non-standard contact varieties (cf Brent-Palmer, 1979); that development in second language competence depends on previously attained competence in the first language (cf Cummins, 1979).

While there is doubtless an element of truth in these views, it is clear that they are based upon notions of deficiency in standard language, and the implied remedy is more instruction. This remedy proposes that, since schools are failing in their function of ensuring adequate academic achievement, then compensation in terms of instruction is called for. Seen in terms of the consensus paradigm, the situation is that one of the component elements (the school) is not discharging its due function, and the consequence is lack of equity with the attendant possibility of disequilibrium in society. The education programme is seen as an independent variable that can be manipulated to determine the dependent aim of academic achievement and linguistic proficiency. However, research on Mexican-American and Puerto Rican students suggests that compensatory education is not successful with minority group students (Cummins, 1986:18).

Some educationalists claim that factors to do with 'culture specific pedagogy' (cf Adelman, 1981:265) rather than simply 'language' may account for the relative lack of academic success of minority students. Thus Philips (1972) points out that the classroom teaching and learning styles expected by 'ordinary' American teachers differ from those of their Oglala Sioux students, to the detriment of the latter, even though they are apparently fluent in English.

The issue that receives acknowledgement, but little more, in these language or culture oriented explanations is that of the power and status relations obtaining between the groups concerned. Clearly the dominant group, which controls institutions, will reflect its own preoccupations and legitimise its own values and practices within the formal education system in terms of content and method of teaching and especially of assessment. Educational systems are obviously concerned with cultural reproduction, but the culture they reproduce is that of the dominant group, not the culture of society as a whole. This will be the case whether we are talking in terms of social classes (cf Bourdieu: 1977), ethnic groups, or linguistic groups. Clearly children from the dominant group, or whose culture is close to the dominant group's, are at an advantage. Children from dominated groups, on the other hand, have to acquire a new variety of language, and new ways of behaving with that language, if they are to succeed in the major assessment procedures. One of the results claimed for this is that children from the dominated groups internalise the inferior status attributed to them by the dominant group (cf Cummins, 1986; Ogbu, 1978; Blanc and Hamers, 1982) and perform accordingly within the educational system.

Cummins (1986) suggests that this negative self-image can be corrected if practices in the school 'reverse' those that obtain in the society at large. Elements in such school practices would include incorporation of minority pupils' culture and language, participation of minority parents in the education of their children, and assessment procedures that do not 'blame' the learners. The type of educational programme envisaged by Cummins deliberately attempts not to reflect the power and status relations of society, for otherwise 'schools will continue to reproduce ..... the power relations that characterise the wider society' (1986: 33).

Programmes of this kind are characterised not by notions of standard language or culture deficiency but rather by the notion of valorisation deficiency. Valorisation is concerned with demonstrating value through consistent and all-embracing use (see Blanc and Hamers, 1982). Cummins proposes that the education system should compensate for the inequality of society through practices (linguistic and cultural) that derive from the minority group. There are clearly problems in such attempts. These include the supply of appropriate teachers and materials; the reserves of commitment and sincerity required from these teachers (children quickly identify folkoric tokenism); and the treatment of majority group children. Furthermore, the independent variables in the 'valorisation deficiency' model are clearly located in the education system. We are still within a consensus paradigm, where compensation provided through the education system will, it is hoped, contribute to social equilibrium.

However, since the proposals made by Cummins are restricted to the school domain, it is difficult to see how they will affect the dominant/dominated power relationships, as claimed by Cummins, in any serious way, far less 'transform society by empowering minority students rather than reflect society by disabling them' (1986: 34). Cummins perceives social iniquities, but does not seem to regard society as a scene of inherent conflict. In the conflict paradigm it is axiomatic that dominant groups will not permit changes that threaten their own interests. Valorising minority languages and cultures within the school system does not represent a real threat, for the changes will be local, and confined to certain schools.

However, even if programmes that effectively valorise minority languages and cultures are locally successful then paradoxically the students emerging from them may be disempowered in a more subtle way. Tajfel (1970, cited in Lewis, 1981:216) suggests that education channelled towards ethnicity facilitates ethnocentrism. True, such students have not been 'taught their place' (Paulston, 1971: 413), nor taught that 'the stigma is deserved' (Hymes, 1971: 3). Quite the contrary; they have, assuming the success of the programme, attached a value to their language and culture that the wider society does not share.

Such students, when they leave school and have to make their way in wider society, respond to the disjunction betwen school and the 'real world' in different ways. One response is to detach themselves from the mainstream of society and pursue an independent existence in quasi-autonomous groups (cf Ogbu, 1978, cited in Cummins, 1986: 22). Such groups are of course subject to tolerance from the majority group. Another response is to come to terms with the discrepancy between their school experience and the 'real world', and assimilate into the majority group (clearly children can come into contact with the 'real world' while attending school, and some will assimilate to the dominant group while at school; to the extent that this happens, then the valorisation programme has failed). A third, more confrontational response is for individuals to resort to opposing action which might be non-violent (eg using the minority language in majority language domains) or violent (eg rebellion or uprising).

Reasons as to why the third violent response is not an inevitable occurrence are various: the dominated group may perceive itself as too weak; it may favour assimilation; above all, and especially in modern urban societies, the relative absence of sustained and coherent group violence is to do with the problematic question, 'when is a group a group?' Without entering into detail, we may note that groups are rarely separated from each other along all possible lines of cleavage (language, ethnicity, religion, occupation, location of residence etc). Individuals within the dominated group will have relationships with individuals from the dominant group which cross-cut the lines of group cleavage. This may affect the ethnolinguistic vitality (see Giles et al, 1977; Johnson et al, 1983) of the dominated group, and also the intensity of the individual's allegiance to the group. An individual's interest as a member of a dominated group is balanced against their interest in the dominant group. It is not realistic to expect members of dominated groups to maintain their cultural boundaries at the price of socio-economic mobility (cf Fishman, 1983). Such networking tends to work towards the assimilation of dominated groups.

## Conclusion

If we accept that groups as a whole do not consent to practices contrary to their own interest, then the consensus based structural-functional theory of society is untenable. Powerless groups may have to accept or acquiesce to their language being excluded from prestigious social domains, and being used less significantly in schooling. However, acceptance or acquiescence do not constitute consent. To the extent that consent occurs, then it indicates willingness to assimilate, and assimilation is no more than a response to conflict.

It follows that if we reject the consensus-based structural-functional theory of society, then the view that schools can fulfill a function in the social structure to maintain consensus is patently baseless. If schools reflect inter-group power relations in their language practices then the minority language will be accorded an insignificant role which will accelate its rate of disuse; on the other hand, if schools reverse inter-group power relations, then they risk exacerbating conflict.

In effect, schools can do no more than the dominant group will allow - they can perpetuate structural conflict, or promote assimilation. These are both eventualities that powerful dominant groups can face with equanimity. (On an individual level, schools can also attempt to promote inter-group tolerance, with a view to preventing conflict of interest from developing into violence.) What schools alone cannot do, expressed in the starkest terms, is to tranform dominated groups into dominant groups. At best they can enhance an individual's capacity for mobility from one group into another. A failure to appreciate the limited possibilities of educational systems to affect inter-group power relations can give rise to impossible expectations of educational policies.

Faced with language and educational practices which are in conflict with their own, the courses open to dominated groups are to attempt one (or a combination of) the following: self-imposed segregation; assimilation; replacing the dominant group and becoming dominant themselves. The utopia of a society composed of groups with differential power coexisting in an integrated fashion without conflict is precluded: dominant groups do not act counter to their own interest, and the education system can only be expected to perpetuate their hegemony.

This bleak conclusion is one that I take no pleasure in. However, I see no ready solution. Solutions, after all, are for problems. We have been considering conflicts, and for conflicts there are no solutions, but simply outcomes.

## References

Adelman, C. (1981) 'Language, Culture and Bilingual Schooling - Reflections after a Case Study of a School' Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 2, 4: 259-68

Blanc,M and Hamers,J (1982) 'Towards a Social Psychological Model of Bilingual Development' Language and Ethicity mimeo Linguistic Minorities Project/BAAL

Blanc,M and Hamers,J (1983) Bilingualité et Bilinguisme Brussels, Pierre Mardaga

Bourdieu,P (1977) Outline of a Theory of Practice Cambridge CUP

Bourhis,R Y, Giles,H, Leyens,J P, and Tajfel,H (1979) 'Psycholinguistic Distinctiveness: Language Divergence in Belgium' in Giles and St Clair (eds)

Brent-Palmer, C (1979) 'A Sociolinguistic Assessment of the Notion "Immigrant Semilingualism" from a Social Conflict Perspective' Working Papers in Bilingualism 17: 135-80

Cummins, J (1979) 'Linguistic Interdependence and the Educational Development of Bilingual Children' Review of Educational Research 49: 222-51

Cummins, J (1984) Bilingualism and Special Education: Issues in Assessment and Pedagogy Clevedon, Multilingual Matters

Cummins, J (1986) 'Empowering Minority Students: A Framework for Intervention' Harvard Educational Review 56, 1: 18-36

Fishman, J (1965) 'Who Speaks What Language to Whom and When' La Linguistique 2: 67-88

Fishman, J (1970) Sociolinguistics Rowley, Newbury House

Fishman, J (ed) (1976) Bilingual Education: an International Sociological Perspective Rowley, Newbury House

Fishman, J (1983) 'The Rise and Fall of the "Ethnic Revival" in the USA' Journal of Intercultural Studies 4: 5-46

Gaarder, B A (1978) 'Bilingual Education: Central Questions and Concerns' Bilingual Education Lafontaine, H, Persky, B and Golubchick, L (eds) Wayne New Jersey, Avery Publishing

Giles, H, Bourhis, R Y, and Taylor, D M (1977) 'Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations' Language, Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations Giles, H (ed) London, Academic Press

Giles, H and St Clair, R N (eds) (1979) Language and Social Psychology Oxford, Blackwell

Heller, M S (1982) 'Negociations of Language Choice in Montréal' Language and Social Identity Gumperz, J (ed) Cambridge CUP

Hymes, D (1971) 'Preface' Pidginization and Creolization of Languages Cambridge CUP

Johnson, P, Giles, H and Bourhis, R Y (1983) 'The Viability of Ethnolonguistic Vitality: A Reply' Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 4, 4: 255-69

Kuhn, T S (1970) The Structure of Scientific Revolutions Chicago, University of Chicago Press

Lambert,W E (1979) 'Language as a Factor in Intergroup Relations' in Giles and St Clair (eds)

Lewis,E G (1981) Bilingualism and Bilingual Education Oxford, Pergamon

Ninyoles,R Ll (1972) Idioma y Poder Social Madrid, Editorial Tecnos

Ogbu,J U (1978) Minority Education and Caste New York, Academic Press

Ortiz,A A and Yates,J R (1983) 'Incidence of exceptionality among Hispanics: Implications for Manpower Planning' NABE Journal 7: 41-54

Parsons,T (1951 - printing 1964) The Social System London, Routledge and Kegan Paul

Paulston,C B (1971) 'On the Moral Dilemma of the Sociolinguist' Language Learning 21: 175-81

Paulston,C B (1980) Bilingual Education: Theories and Issues Rowley, Newbury House

Paulston,C B (1982) 'Introduction' Issues in International Bilingual Education Hartford,B and Valdman,A (eds) New York and London, Plenum Press

Philips,S U (1972) 'Participant Structures and Communicative Competence' Functions of Language in the Classroom Cazden,C, John,V, and Hymes,D (eds) New York, Teachers College Press

Radcliffe-Brown,A R (1931) 'The Social Organisation of Australian Tribes' Oceana Monographs 1 Melbourne

Radcliffe-Brown,A R (1952, reprinted 1968) Structure and Function in Primitive Society London, Cohen and West

Skutnabb-Kangas,T (1978) 'Semilingualism and the Education of Migrant Children as a Means of Reproducing the Caste of Assembly Line Workers' Papers from the First Scandanavian-German Symposium on the Language of Immigrant Workers and their Children 221-51, Roskilde Universitets Center

Williams,G (1982) 'Functional Problematics and Discursive Practice in Sociolinguistics' Language and Ethnicity mimeo Linguistic Minorities Project/BAAL

# The effects of style and speaking rate on /l/-vocalisation in local Cambridge English*

Susan Wright
(University of Cambridge)

ABSTRACT

This paper reports the results and conclusions of an auditory study of local Cambridge English, focussing on the effect of style on the vocalisation of /l/. This sociolinguistic feature has been described as a feature marking south eastern varieties of British English, and as a connected speech process in its sensitivity to variation in speaking rate. The study concludes that this feature is socially salient in local Cambridge English.

## 1. Introduction

The vocalisation of /l/ has been described as a feature marking working-class London speech and Cockney English (Gimson, 1980:202-3; Wells, 1982:313-5). Wells cites it as a change in progress, his argument being that speakers do not apply vocalisation consistently to all possible sites of vocalisation. For instance, he notes that many speakers restrict it to preconsonantal ((#)C) and absolute-final (||) position, as in 'real nuisance' and 'all.'. Some speakers extend it to word-final prevocalic environments (_V), as in 'call Andy'. Wells comments that this extension is indicative of the gradual establishment of vocalised /l/ as an alternative to velarised /l/ as an allophone of /l/ in English.

The vocalisation of syllabic /l/ is very common in many varieties of English which do not have vocalisation in any other environment. So vocalisation tends to occur in words like 'middle', 'purple' and 'crumble'.

Trudgill (1974:182) refers to the vocalised variant as a phonetic realisation rule in Norwich English. This description implies that vocalisation is a strategy employed in connected speech, and suggests that it is affected by speaking rate. It also implies that particular dialects or regional varieties adopt particular connected speech processes (CSPs) as socially salient markers of the speech community.

In an auditory study, the results of which I have reported elsewhere (Wright 1987), I investigated the sociolinguistic status of some CSPs in the speech of local Cambridge speakers. These included glottalisation, palatalisation and /l/-vocalisation. Speakers were asked to read a set of sentences containing sites for the application of these CSPs at three different rates of utterance; first 'slowly and carefully'; then 'at a normal speed', and finally 'as fast as possible'. The results showed that the incidence of /l/-vocalisation in local Cambridge English appears to be strongly correlated with age. This suggests support for the claims of both Trudgill and Wells, that it is spreading to urban varieties of south eastern

York Papers in Linguistics 13 (1989) 355-365
© the author

English, notably in the speech of young people.

Figure 1 shows the percentages of vocalisation in the three reading styles defined in terms of speaking rate, for speakers under 25 and over 30.

| | YOUNG | | | OLD | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MODES | SLOW | NORMAL | FAST | SLOW | NORMAL | FAST |
| -VOC | 26 | 15 | 23 | 46 | 34 | 33 |
| +VOC | 74 | 85 | 77 | 54 | 66 | 67 |

Figure 1: Percentage occurrence of /l/-vocalisation in young and old speakers across reading modes

Notice first that the young speakers have a very high proportion of vocalised /l/ overall, in contrast to the older speakers. Secondly, speakers' behaviour is not absolutely consistent. They exhibit differences in their use of vocalised /l/ at different rates of utterance. These observations strongly suggested that on the one hand /l/-vocalisation is becoming a feature of local Cambridge youngsters' speech. On the other, its incidence appears to be affected to some extent by varying speaking rate; that is, it seems to be a weakly phonetically motivated CSP. These assertions raise the question of the salience of the feature as a sociolinguistic variable and as a phonetic connected speech process.

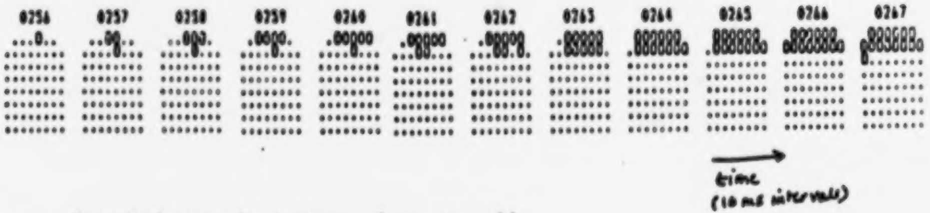
## 2. Speaking rate and /l/-vocalisation

To examine the effect of speaking rate on /l/-vocalisation, I undertook a study of the relation between time and articulation of the CSP (Wright 1987). This was an electropalatography (henceforth EPG) study. Previous work on the relationship between alveolar place assimilation and speaking rate has shown that rate-dependence is matched by the continuous (or 'gradual') articulation of CSPs.

Figure 2 shows the EPG records of three articulations of the final consonant of the word well, in illustration of the gradual or continuous nature of /l/-vocalisation. I discerned three patterns of articulation, corresponding with three degrees of vocalisation. The frames in each row are records of lingual- palatal contact at 10msec intervals during continuous speech. Each frame represents the palatal 'map'. The top four rows correspond to the alveolar ridge and post-alveolar areas; the bottom four rows correspond to the palatal and (pre-)velar areas of the oral cavity. The dark spots on each frame represent actual contact between the tongue and the palate.

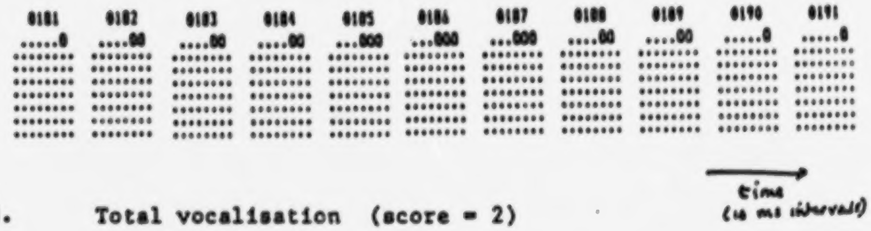
1. Non-vocalisation (score = 0)

well# (total alveolar contact)


0256
0257
0258
0259
0260
0261
0262
0263
0264
0265
0266
0267
time
(10 ms intervals)

2. Partial vocalisation (score = 1)

well# (residual alveolar contact)


0181
0182
0183
0184
0185
0186
0187
0188
0189
0190
0191
time
(10 ms intervals)

3. Total vocalisation (score = 2)

well# (no alveolar contact)

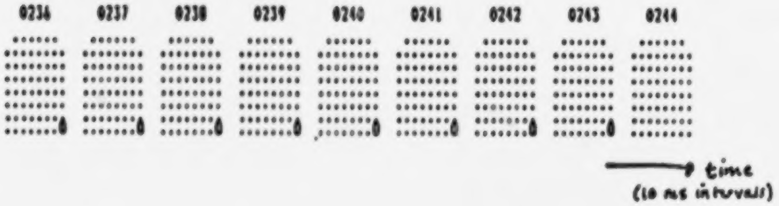

0236
0237
0238
0239
0240
0241
0242
0243
0244
time
(10 ms intervals)

Figure 2: Palatograms of 'well'

The first extract shows complete alveolar contact, indicating full articulation of the lateral. Note that since EPG does not register tongue gesture, we cannot distinguish between the articulation of clear and dark /l/. The second shows incomplete or residual alveolar contact. In articulatory terms, this is partial vocalisation of the lateral. The third shows zero alveolar contact, with minimal velar contact characteristic of the articulation of back vowels (like /u/). This represents complete vocalisation in articulatory terms.

Two EPG subjects (both speakers of local Cambridge English under 25 years of age) performed the same task as the speakers in the auditory study. They read a set of sentences at slow, normal and fast rates. The sentences contained possible assimilation sites and environments in which vocalised /l/ could occur.

Figure 3 shows the mean scores for alveolar place assimilation and /l/-vocalisation for two EPG subjects. The scores are taken over a gradually

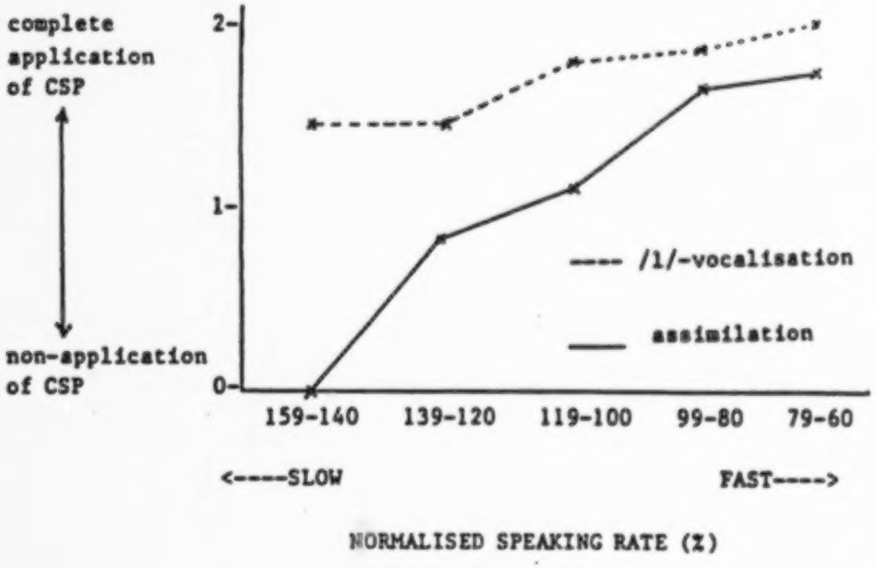


Figure 3: Mean scores for assimilation and /l/-vocalisation for two EPG subjects:

increasing speaking rate. Notice that the incidence of assimilation seems to be strongly affected by an increase in speaking rate. Slowest speaking rates do not exhibit assimilation (indicated by the zero marking 0), while fast speech tends to host an increase in assimilation. The speakers exhibit a tendency for partial and complete assimilations in articulatory terms.

/l/-vocalisation is weakly affected by speaking rate. The point to note is that whereas there is a gradual increase in assimilation from zero to nearly 2 (almost complete assimilation), even at slow rates of speech, /l/ shows a tendency towards vocalisation (in articulatory terms), increasing to full vocalisation (2). The figures reviewed in this context refer to the degree of gradualness of the articulation of these CSPs. It is important to note that /l/-vocalisation contrasts markedly with assimilation in auditory terms. While there appears to be articulatory gradualness, the auditory distinction between non- vocalised dark /l/ and vocalised /l/ is quite discrete.

The weak rate-dependence of /l/-vocalisation raises the following issue: Given the observation that vocalisation does seem to increase at faster speaking rates, why does the incidence of vocalisation apparently level off or even drop in favour of non-vocalised /l/ in the fast speech reading of the subjects in the auditory study? Referring again to Figure 1, notice that in the speech of the young subjects, the frequency of vocalised /l/ increases from 74% in slow mode to 85% in the normal reading mode. But then, with a shift into a fast reading mode, it falls slightly to 77%. For the older group, while there is not a significant drop in vocalisation with the increase of speaking rate from normal to fast, it remains more or less level (66% for normal; 67%

for fast).

This data for the auditory study of younger and older speakers holds a clue to the decrease in vocalised /l/ at fast speaking rates. Both junctural environments (operating across word boundaries) and word-internal ones were investigated as potential sites of /l/-vocalisation. The high frequency lexical items like *always* and the phrase *all sorts* tended to show vocalisation for all speakers in all reading modes. However, junctural contexts, where /l/ occurs pre-vocalically, as in the phrase 'ca*ll* Andy', showed clear or 'clarified' /l/ in fast mode, resulting in [kolaendi]; whereas slower rates of speech produced the vocalised variant of /l/, thus [kowaendi].

It seems that the appearance of clear /l/ might account for the increase in non-vocalised /l/ at fast rates of speech. This analysis suggests that there is another variant of /l/, which seems to be part of a strategy for linking /l/ and adjacent vocalic elements in fast speech. This connected speech phenomenon of '/l/-clarification', seems to interact with the sociolinguistic CSP of /l/-vocalisation.

## 3. Connected speech and /l/-clarification

The notion of the interaction of connected speech processes (in this case, *fast* speech processes) with a sociolinguistic variable needs some clarification. Connected speech processes (CSPs) are those processes which occur at word boundaries in the stream of speech. That is, they do not occur at the word boundaries of isolated or citation forms. CSPs like assimilation, palatalisation and the focus of the present paper, /l/ clarification are conditioned by phonetic factors like speaking rate, and non-linguistic factors like stylistic variation.

These processes do of course occur as predictable morphophonemic processes within words, and their phonetic realisations are established in the phonology to the extent that they are expected to exhibit variability only as a consequence of dialect or accent differences. Thus palatalisation is analysed as a historical process, of the coalescence of /s, z/ + /j/, /t, d/ + /j/, realised in the Modern English phonemes /ʃ, ʒ/ in the course of the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth century, /tʃ, dʒ/ (as in *soldier* [souɫdʒə], *feature* [fiːtʃə]) Gimson, 1980: 176). Alveolar place assimilation (e.g. of an alveolar to an adjacent bilabial or velar) is to some extent also fixed in the phonology (in the loanwords *incongruent*, *impress*, where the phonetic realisation of the borrowed prefix -*in* was already dependent on its context in the target language, Latin). These processes are treated as regular sound changes, which have become phonologised, and hence part of the system.

In connected speech, an obvious but important point to make is that collocations are not fixed, and so the occurrence of these processes depends far more on phonetic conditioning factors than on phonological environment. Studies in the Cambridge project demonstrate for instance, that alveolar place assimilation is likely to occur more frequently and consistently at faster speaking rates and in more casual styles than in slower, more formal speech. Phonological environment then is not the determining factor. So, for example, the lexical pair *hand grenade* may be realised in speech as [haendgɹəneid], [haengɹəneid] or even [haeŋgɹneid], depending on the phonetic conditions.

The phenomenon of /l/ clarification should be treated in a similar fashion. It occurs variably, but most predictably in fast speech, in which syllable boundaries become re-aligned, in order to facilitate linking. (It might be considered akin to the generalisation of 'intrusive /r/' from the strategy of using /r/ to link words.) Consequently, while it is clearly a morphophonemic rule in one domain of speech, and thus phonological or system oriented -- within the word; /l/ clarification (a realisation of the more general phenomenon of resyllabification) functions as a speaker strategy for organising syllables and their combination in fast speech.

It is this role which justifies its treatment in connected speech as a variant of velarised or vocalised /l/. The notion of interaction rather than simple alternation or substitution between velarised and vocalised /l/ and clear /l/ is used in an attempt to emphasise the dependence of these different strategies on phonetic factors.

## 4. Style and variation in /l/

The problem of the co-occurrence and indeed interaction of vocalisation of /l/ and clarification of /l/ observed in the earlier Cambridge study (reported in Wright, 1987) motivated another study using local Cambridge speakers.

A set of sentences focussing on different phonological environments for the vocalisation of /l/ was constructed. As in the earlier general auditory study, speakers were asked to read the sentences in three different modes:

as slowly and as carefully as possible;
normally; and
as fast as possible.

This range of modes was intended to provide the basis for relating /l/-vocalisation and /l/-clarification to speaking rate. In addition, a short story, containing dialogue, about a trip to Wells-Next-the-Sea was constructed. This passage also focussed on potential sites of the variation in the realisation of /l/. On the basis of Wells' observations and my earlier study, it was expected that pre-consonantal and absolute-final contexts would show /l/-vocalisation to be the over-riding tendency in the behaviour of the sixteen Cambridge subjects interviewed. On the other hand, the pre-vocalic contexts represent environments which could exhibit vocalisation and clarification.

### 4.1 Results

The results are illuminating. Figure 4 shows the percentage totals for all the speakers across the different rate-oriented and speech-act type styles. Note that these figures cover all the phonological environments identified in Table 1.

| Environment | Example |
|---|---|
| | pre-consonantal |
| V_#C | real nuisance<br>awful feeling<br>mechanical things<br>apple crumble<br>football side<br>all men |
| | absolute-final |
| _//. | ...final.<br>...all.<br>...school. |
| | pre-vocalic |
| _#V | |
| i. C_#V | middle of<br>Marble Arch<br>crumble and<br>purple if |
| ii. V_#V | while I<br>stole our<br>well it's<br>Sal on |

Table 1: Phonological environments for variation in /l/

Velarised (dark) /l/ decreases in occurrence over the rate-dependent modes: from around 42% in slow mode, to 20% in fast reading mode. On the other hand, there is a parallel increase in both /l/-vocalisation and /l/-clarification.

Consider the incidence of /l/-vocalisation in the sentence readings first. The slow mode has around 40% vocalisation (which is just slightly lower than the proportion of velarised /l/). Its incidence increases slightly in the reading of sentences at a 'normal' rate of utterance, and reaches 43% in the fast reading mode. The incidence of clear /l/ increases from 13% in the slow reading to 25% in the fast reading.

If we compare the sentence readings with the narrative reading, the levels of each variant in the story data are roughly comparable with those from the fast reading mode. The similarity of the responses for each variant in the fast reading mode and the narrative is quite striking. In particular, it raises the question of the distinction between rate of utterance and speech situation type in affecting the phonetic realisation of /l/. Also, it prompts the question: what is the relative status of /l/-vocalisation and /l/-clarification? And is it the case that they interact, and if they do, how? Consider the distribution of the variants in the speakers' behaviour for each phonological environment.

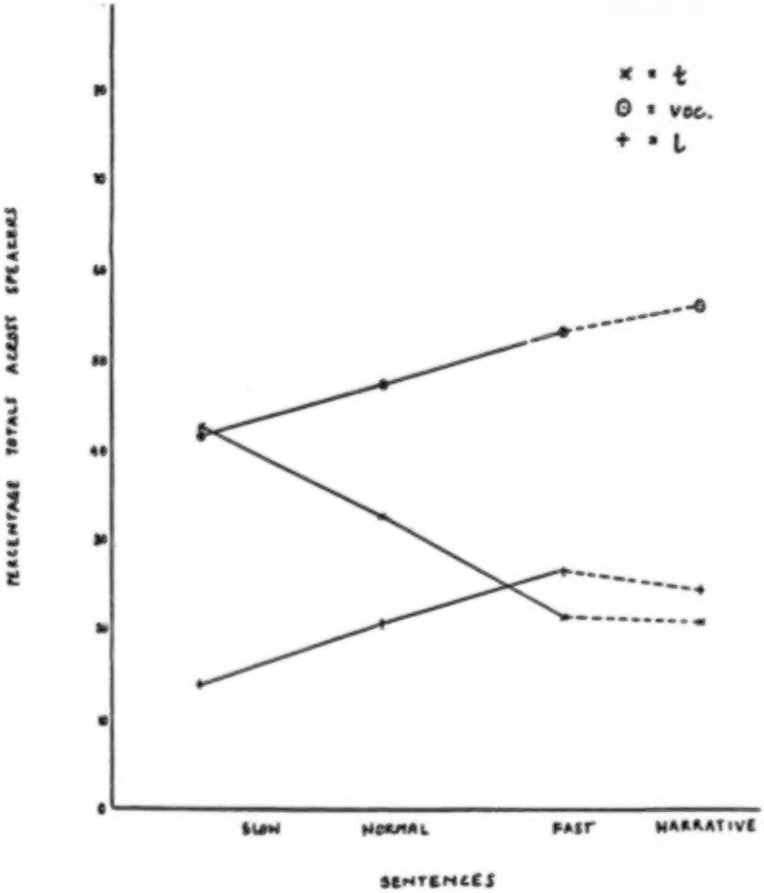
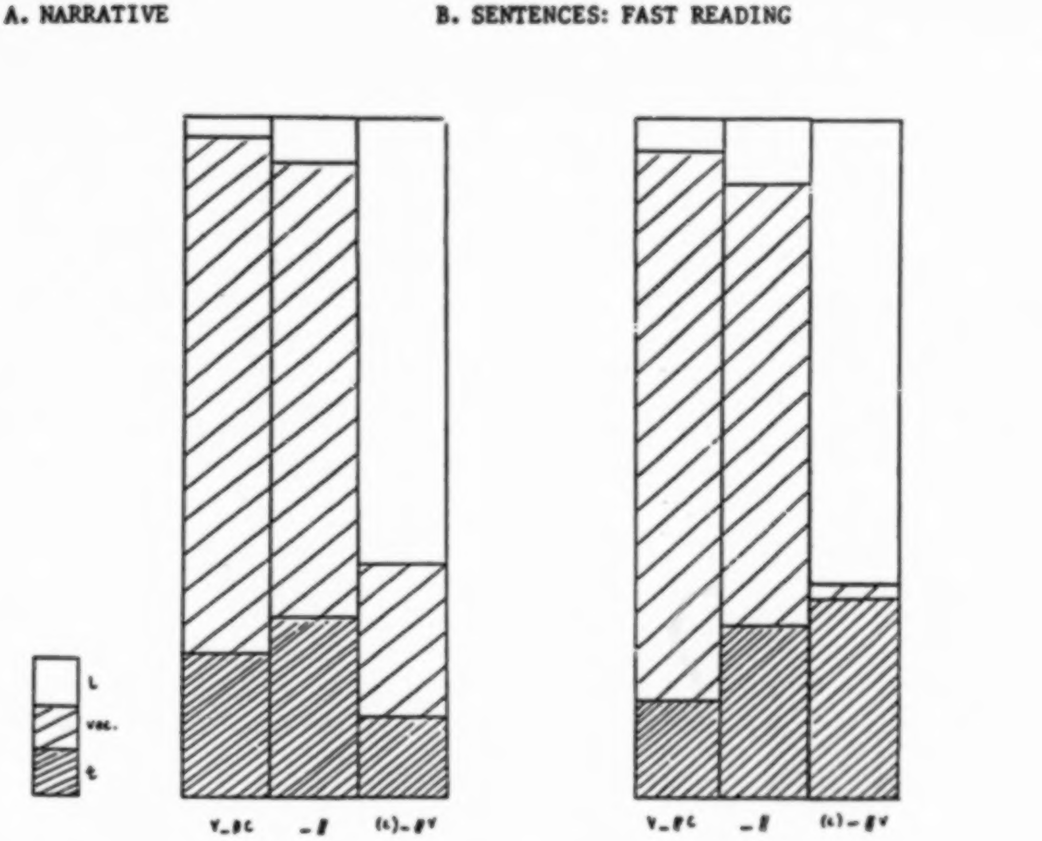


Figure 4: Percentage totals across speakers and styles, showing variation in the phonetic realisation of /l/.

Figure 5 shows the proportional breakdown for speakers' behaviour in each phonological environment -- in the narrative and in the fast reading for the sentences. Notice that as expected, /l/-vocalisation accounts for most of the responses in pre-consonantal and absolute-final environments (the first two columns of A and B in Figure 5). However, clear /l/ was actually produced by some speakers. For instance, in the narrative, the sequences all to and all those exhibited a clear /l/ before the dental [o:l tʉ; o:l d̪ez]. These (aberrant) pronunciations could be accounted for by suggesting that the speaker 's perception of vocalisation as a stigmatised feature produces a hypercorrect reaction. The reaction is to produce a clear /l/ when the speaker may not have velarised /l/ in his/her repertoire. The clear variant also occurred pre-pausally and sentence-finally, for example, in school//. In the sentence readings, clear /l/ occurred in the sequence all the, not as a marker of hypercorrect behaviour, but as a consequence of resyllabification where the dental had been 'deleted' as a fast speech process; thus [o:(+)lə]. It also occurred pre-pausally and sentence-finally in all//. This instance might be a part of a strategy to signal the end of a phonetic and syntactic unit (but not necessarily a turn).



A. NARRATIVE

B. SENTENCES: FAST READING

Figure 5: Distribution of /l/ variants across phonological environments.

In pre-vocalic environments, the proportion of /l/-vocalisation is much lower: 22% in the story, and only 4% in the reading mode. The environment accounting for this proportion in the story is the vocalisation of word-final /l/ in crumble and. Speakers tended to have either clear or vocalised /l/ in this context, and very rarely velarised /l/.

## 5. Discussion

How can we interpret the apparent similarity between the scores for the sentence reading in fast mode and the narrative? The similarity suggests an equation of fast speaking rate (often associated with 'casual' speech) with the arguably less formal, more cohesive story style. Both texts involve a reading task. However, the sentences (in the list) represent a series of short assertions on unconnected topics, so it is possible to see the production of each sentence as a distinct speech act. There is no continuity or development of topic to hold the speaker's interest, and it is arguable that the speaker focusses on the task of reading at the highest possible speed.

In contrast, the story has characters who interact using dialogue, and there is a discernible line of narrative. It is possible that speakers treat this task as a kind of performance in story-telling, and not as a simple mechanical reading task. For instance, they assign particular (appropriate) intonation patterns, and add laughter at particular points in the dialogue.

If we make a stylistic distinction between the story and the sentence readings, we can account for the column (Figure 5) showing the distribution of variants for pre-vocalic environments. In particular, /l/-vocalisation seems to be a marker of colloquial Cambridge English, but it is also weakly rate-dependent. It is a CSP which has social salience and some phonetic motivation as shown by EPG (Figure 2 above). It is established in pre-consonantal and absolute-final position, and appears to be increasing in occurrence in pre-vocalic environments (see story column in Figure 5). So it appears to be in the process of losing its sensitivity to rate, as it acquires stability in colloquial styles (as represented by the story reading. Detailed auditory analysis of the incidence of /l/-vocalisation in conversational data gathered from the same subjects is reported in Wright, in prep.).

/l/-vocalisation interacts with a linguistic phenomenon -- /l/-clarification — in an interesting way. When speaking rate increases, /l/-vocalisation in pre-vocalic position seems to be inhibited by a strategy to link words. This is apparently a phonetic consequence of the phonological process of re-syllabification. Its effect is to maintain the alveolar lateral in word-initial position, and as this lateral is phonetically realised as clear (non-velarised) in this position, the velarised (or in the case of Cambridge speakers, vocalised) lateral is replaced. It has the consequence, then, of moving /l/ from word-final position to word-initial position of the following word:

call Andy [ko:ɫ aendi:] >> ca llAndy [ko: laendi]

The issue of the relative linguistic status of /l/-vocalisation and what I have termed /l/-clarification (for convenience) is one that poses questions for phonological accounts of speech. It also raises the question of the linguistic substance of a (socio) linguistic variable. That is, if dark /l/ and velarised /l/ are treated as two variants of a variable, is it not possible that clear /l/ is a variant of the same: as a consequence of the effects of the interaction of speaking rate and style on the morphophonological environment in which vocalisation/velarisation occurs?

To broach these issues more fully, we would need to question whether there is a principled basis for distinguishing between the processes described, or whether they are related processes which are variably affected by the natures of their domains of operation or application (see Wright, in prep.). The results of this experiment demonstrate that style plays a significant role in distinguishing between CSPs which are affected by rate. They also suggest strongly that CSPs functioning as fast speech strategies are influenced by style.

## NOTES

* This research is supported by the ESRC (No C00232227) project on the Sociophonetic Study of Cambridge English.

## REFERENCES

Gimson, A.C. (1980) An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English London: Arnold (3rd ed.)

Trudgill, P (1974) The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich. Cambridge: CUP.

Wells, J (1982) The Accents of English. Cambridge: CUP.

Wright, S (1987) The interaction of sociolinguistic and phonetically-conditioned CSPs in Cambridge English: auditory and electropalatographic evidence. Cambridge Papers in Phonetics and Experimental Linguistics 5. Cambridge.

Wright, S (in prep.) The interaction of variants of /l/ in the phonological domains of connected speech.